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London: FETTER LANE, E.C.
C. F. CLAY, MANAGER

Edinburgh: 100, PRINCES STREET
Berlin: A. ASHER AND CO.
Leipzig: F. A. BROCKHAUS
New York: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
Bombay and Calcutta: MACMILLAN AND Co., LTD.

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THE
RELIGION OF ISRAEL

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

BY

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Una salus et unus Deus: quae autem formant hominem praecepta multa, et non pauci gradus qui ducunt hominem ad Deum.

IREN. *c. Haer.* IV. 9. 3.

29985
1922

First Edition 1905
Second Edition 1913

PREFATORY NOTE.

THIS book is intended to supplement the *Short History of the Hebrews* (published in 1901) in which the writer was unable to deal particularly with the development of *religion* in Israel. The concluding chapter of the present work will sufficiently indicate the standpoint from which the subject is treated. No attempt is made to deal exhaustively with the theology of the Old Testament, but only to depict in general outline the course of Israel's spiritual history.

For the full titles of the works briefly referred to as 'Marti,' 'Smend,' 'Kautzsch,' etc., see page 219.

April, 1905.

R. L. O.

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CHAPTER I.

THE PRIMITIVE RELIGION OF THE SEMITES.

Introductory.

In a former volume the external history of the Hebrew people has been briefly sketched. We traced in broad outline its progress from the dim and remote period when its ancestors formed an insignificant group among the nomad Semitic tribes who wandered in the deserts of Northern Arabia, to the time when it finally lost its independence and was merged in the Roman Empire. But Israel's importance for the world was at no time merely political. If at the present day the Jewish race survives the strange vicissitudes through which it has passed, it can no longer be said to form, in any true sense, a separate nation. The children of Abraham, in spite of their famous history, are virtually homeless,

> 'like glowing brands
> Tost wildly o'er a thousand lands
> For twice a thousand year[1].'

Israel's unique claim to glory consists in the fact that Almighty God entrusted it with a religious mission to mankind. 'The Law,' says Athanasius in a memorable passage, 'was not for the Jews alone, nor were the prophets sent for them only, but, though sent to the Jews and persecuted by the Jews, they were

[1] J. Keble, *Christian Year*.

for all the world a sacred school of the knowledge of God and of the spiritual life[1].' In fact the Old Testament history, which describes how God Himself founded a kingdom upon earth and educated a people to be the instrument of His redemptive purpose for mankind, depicts the early stages of a movement which finds its climax and continuation in the New Testament. The Gospel message was originally preached upon the soil of Palestine; it was addressed in the first instance to *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*; it proclaimed the fulfilment of the age-long hopes and ideals which Hebrew saints and prophets had cherished, and the foundation of a spiritual kingdom which Israel's national polity had vaguely foreshadowed. Thus, although the Incarnation marked a new beginning in human history, yet regarded merely as an historical event it stood in the closest relation to the previous career of the Jewish people. In one aspect at least it was the crowning point of a slow and continuous development. It was a culminating manifestation *in the fulness of time* of Him who had progressively revealed Himself to His chosen people *by divers portions and in divers manners*. The new revelation did not supersede the old, but rather filled it with hitherto unperceived significance. At each stage of Israel's history, in proportion to Israel's spiritual capacity, God disclosed His nature, His purpose, and His moral requirement, and finally in the gift of His Son He satisfied the yearnings and anticipations which His own Spirit had inspired[2]. Accordingly since, to use our Lord's words, *salvation is of the Jews*[3], no study can be more full of interest than that of the history of Hebrew religion, inasmuch as it discloses to us the actual method by which God gradually accomplished His purpose of salvation. Moreover, it illustrates the infinite forbearance with which He led the chosen people onwards from very lowly ideas of Deity to a doctrine which the incarnate Son could claim as His own and

[1] Athan. *de Incarnatione*, XII. 5.

[2] Cp. Irenaeus, *c. Haer.* III. 3. 3.

[3] St John iv. 22.

re-enforce with divine authority; from very rude and imperfect notions of righteousness to a type of character which is not essentially changed, but only invested with supreme lustre and power in the sinless holiness of Jesus Christ; from crude nationalistic hopes and aspirations to the triumphant assurance that the true Messiah, the Son of God, *is come in the flesh, is risen indeed*, and is enthroned *on the right hand of the majesty on high*; that He *upholds all things by the word of His power*; that *He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet*[1].

It is of primary importance in the study of Hebrew religion to remember the principle that 'the beginning finds its true interpretation in the end.' The religious history of Israel is in fact the record of an *evolution*, and everything depends on the point of view from which it is approached. In the light of the result actually aimed at and attained, that which looks *prima facie* like a purely natural process is to Christian eyes transfigured. Even in the earliest and lowest stages of the upward movement the presence of an inspiring and controlling idea can be discerned—an idea not indeed consciously realised by the men of the time, yet to some extent moulding their thought and directing their actions. Thus institutions which in themselves appear common and rudimentary acquire dignity and significance; conceptions rude and distorted dimly suggest sublime and far-reaching truths. It was the great function of *prophecy* to elucidate the spiritual ideas which underlay the peculiar institutions of Israel and the successive events of its history. In each generation the prophets were the leading spirits, quick to discern the inner meaning of what was passing, or daily enacted, before their eyes, and continually pointing their contemporaries to a time when the ideas embodied in the history should find their fulfilment. Accordingly in studying Hebrew religion we have to bear in mind that

[1] 1 St John iv. 2; St Luke xxiv. 34; Heb. i. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 25.

prophecy contains the true interpretation of the history, and that the distinctive conceptions of Old Testament theology were developed in close connection with the national life.

Sources and presuppositions.

In the present volume the growth of Israel's religion will be described. The sources of information are virtually identical with those which are available for the external history of the Hebrews, but the way in which they will be used is to some extent different The chief incidents and turning-points in the national history need to be considered in their relation to the development of religious ideas, and the writings of the prophets, historians, psalmists and wise men of Israel assume for the student of Old Testament theology a new importance. These writings do not merely imply or record a particular series of historical events; they embody the religious thoughts of successive generations. Consequently, it becomes a matter of interest to determine, at least roughly, the chronological order of the Old Testament books, since the account given by different writers of the successive stages in Israel's religious history will of course vary to some extent with the critical presuppositions of the historian. For present purposes it must suffice to give a summary of the main points on which modern critics of all schools are agreed.

1. As regards the pre-Mosaic period, we have to depend on narratives compiled in a comparatively late age (the ninth and eighth centuries B.C.). These narratives embody certain traditions concerning primeval history which were shared by other Semitic peoples; they give us, in fact, a view of the earliest period which is coloured by the definite religious conceptions of the writers, and it must be borne in mind that probably this 'religious colouring' is more important for the purposes of an historian than the actual details of the narrative[1].

[1] Smend, *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte*, p. 18, 'Was die Genesis über die Religion der Erzväter erzählt, beruht zumeist auf Zurücktragung späteren Glaubens an die erste Anfange der Geschichte.'

2. The religion of the Old Testament may be said to begin with the work of Moses. It is impossible to determine precisely how much of the legislation ascribed to him actually belongs to his epoch; but it is generally admitted that Moses was Israel's earliest lawgiver, and that the Hebrews were subjected to the discipline of a legal code, consisting chiefly of moral and social enactments, for some centuries before the beginnings of written prophecy (*c.* 800). The 'Book of the Covenant' (Exod. xx.—xxiii.) is usually regarded as the charter of Mosaism.

3. The most creative period in the history of Hebrew religion is that which is represented by the earliest writing prophets. With prophecy in a somewhat advanced stage must be closely connected the appearance of the book of Deuteronomy, which exercised a powerful influence both upon religious thought and upon the estimate which historians were led to form of Israel's past career and ideal vocation. The book of Deuteronomy regarded from the ethical point of view reflects the teachings of the earliest written prophecy; regarded as a legislative code it is for the most part an expansion of the essential principles of Mosaism.

4. The fall of Jerusalem (586) marks the beginning of what is perhaps the most important epoch in Israel's religious history. Theology of the noblest type (Ezekiel and Isaiah xl.—lxvi.), a comprehensive system of legislation embracing the entire life of the community (the completed Levitical code), a devotional literature of unsurpassed depth and spiritual force (the Psalter), a body of ethical teaching which is the outcome of systematic reflection on the phenomena of nature and the problems of human life (the 'Wisdom' literature)—all these are characteristic products of the period which began with the exile. During the five centuries which preceded the birth of Jesus Christ, Israel entered as it were into full possession of its spiritual inheritance. It assimilated and in some respects developed the teachings of prophecy; it gradually arrived at

those conceptions of God which implied the possibility of a further and final revelation; it discovered in what seemed to be a purely national faith the elements of personal religion, and in so doing imparted to Judaism an 'universalistic' tendency.

This general survey of the course of Israel's religious history suffices to show that the development of religion proceeded most rapidly at a later stage than was at one time supposed. The tendency of modern criticism is to attribute much to Moses, but even more to the prophets who succeeded him; and it assigns special importance to the age of reflection which followed the downfall of the Hebrew monarchy. It is also evident that the Old Testament itself supplies us with very few *data* respecting the primitive beliefs and ideas which formed as it were the natural basis of the Old Testament religion. In attempting to reconstruct this earliest stage in Hebrew thought we are for the most part dependent on the help of archaeology and on the analogies suggested by the comparative study of religions.

For purposes of convenience our survey will be divided as follows:

Division of the subject.

I. The pre-Mosaic age, during which the Hebrew tribes shared to a considerable extent the ideas and practices of their Semitic kinsfolk.

II. The age of Moses, the virtual founder of the religion of JAHVEH.

III. The age that intervenes between Moses and the foundation of the monarchy—an obscure epoch but one of crucial importance in Israel's religious development.

IV. The age of the earliest written prophecy (the eighth century B.C.), when the Hebrews first came into contact or collision with the great world-empires of Western Asia, and began under the guidance of the prophets to realise their function as the people of God and the recipients of a divine revelation.

V. The period intervening between the fall of the northern kingdom (721) and the exile (586).

VI. The exile in Babylon and the subsequent restoration of the Jews to their own land.

VII. The age of Judaism, which, roughly speaking, dates from the mission of Ezra (*c.* 458) and ends with the death of Alexander the Great (323).

VIII. The latest phase of the Old Testament religion, when theological ideas were progressively modified by the advance of 'Hellenism.' This phase may be said to find its limit in the final triumph of the Maccabaean movement and the virtual close of the Old Testament Canon, but it needs to be illustrated by the teaching contained in various 'apocalyptic' writings which appeared during the century before and after the birth of Christ.

Origin of the Hebrews.

The date and the actual circumstances of the immigration of the Hebrews into Canaan can only be a matter of conjecture. The main facts of their earliest history seem to be correctly outlined in the book of Genesis. It is reasonably supposed that the Hebrews originally formed a nomad tribe or group of tribes, dwelling in the deserts south of Palestine; that they were closely related to the Canaanites, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and Aramaeans, and that for a long period the ancestors of these various peoples lived together and used a common language. In process of time these tribes moved westward into Palestine from the region of upper Mesopotamia. The ancestors of the Canaanites seem to have settled in the western districts; those of Moab and Ammon occupied the territory eastward of Jordan; but the Hebrew clans descended into Egypt, and after a prolonged sojourn there found a permanent settlement in Canaan. It is practically certain that the original ancestors of the Hebrews shared the religious beliefs and customs of the pastoral Semites. Our first chapter will be devoted to a brief description and estimate of this primitive worship.

It must be borne in mind at the outset that no literature belonging to this pre-historic age has been preserved. The famous tablets discovered at Tel-el-Amarna in 1888 do not directly help us, since they make no indisputable mention of the Hebrew tribes. They do, however, prove that the civilisation of Palestine in the fourteenth century B.C. was affected to no small extent by the culture of Babylon and Egypt, and it is certain that in the domain of religion the influence of Babylon prevailed. But the Old Testament contains unmistakeable traces of an earlier stage in Hebrew religion than that described in the historical books. Behind the positive religion founded and developed by the inspired organs of divine revelation lies a body of primitive usage and belief which 'formed part of that inheritance from the past into which successive generations of the Semitic race grew up as it were instinctively, taking it as a matter of course that they should believe and act as their fathers had done before them[1].' A passage in the book of Joshua enjoins the Benê Israel to *put away the gods which* their *fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt*[2], and it is clear, partly from the results of modern investigation, partly from peculiar customs and usages which survive in later times, that the primitive religion of the Hebrew tribes closely resembled that of their Semitic kinsfolk in Arabia[3].

Semitic conception of Deity.

The first question which meets us is naturally a simple one: What was the ancient Semitic conception of Deity? It has never been conclusively proved that the primitive Semites were in the strict sense polytheists; on the other hand they certainly were not monotheists, though it may be fairly asserted that in their devotion to a single tribal god they showed a tendency towards monolatry[4]. The word 'polydaemonism' has been suggested

[1] W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 2.

[2] Josh. xxiv. 14. [3] Cp. Smend, p. 19.

[4] Smend, p. 26, 'In der semitischen Stammesreligion liegt die letzte geschichtliche Wurzel des Monotheismus.' M. Renan, as is well known,

as more accurately describing their point of view. Though they recognised the existence of different deities, bound by the tie of kinship to particular tribes, they did not apparently offer simultaneous worship to many gods. They had, however, a very strong sense of the supernatural. To them every striking natural object seemed to conceal the presence of a supernatural being, and such objects came to be regarded with reverence and awe as the *abode* of the divine power to which worship was directed. Owing perhaps to the ruggedness and barrenness of his ordinary surroundings, the Arabian nomad was continually impressed with a sense of the presence of *life* or *force* in things. Nature was for him full of supernatural beings, which were regarded as manifesting themselves in material objects, animate or inanimate. Such a supernatural being was sometimes called the *'El* (Assyr. *ilu*; Arab. *'ilah*) or 'strong one'; sometimes the *Ba'al*, 'owner,' of the place or object in which he manifested himself. The object itself, whether stone, cave, tree, fountain, or stream, was called *beth-el*, 'abode of *'El*' (Phoen. *bêtyl*, Gk. *βαίτυλος*, *βαιτύλιον*, Lat. *baetulus*), since the deity or demon was supposed to be actually resident in it. It was, however, a peculiarity of the Semitic conception that the sacred object was actually treated as the deity himself, who was supposed to inhabit the sacred tree or stone 'not in the sense in which a man inhabits a house, but in the sense in which his soul inhabits his body[1].'

Thus the ancient Semite felt himself to be surrounded by spiritual beings, to whom he did not as a rule apply definite

maintains that 'even from the most ancient times the Semite patriarch had a secret tendency towards monotheism' (*Histoire du Peuple d'Israël*, bk. i. c. 1); but see the remarks of Prof. G. A. Smith, *Mod. Criticism and the preaching of the O. T.* pp. 118 foll.; and H. Schultz, *O. T. Theology*, vol. i. pp. 97 foll. [E. T.].

[1] W. Robertson Smith, *op. cit.* p. 85. See the whole passage. Cp. Smend, p. 38, 'Eine gewisse Unterscheidung von Leib und Seele ist uralt und vom Menschen übertrug man sie nach Bedürfniss auf alle Gegenstände der Aussenwelt.'

names, but rather *titles* expressive of reverence, awe, and submission: *'El*, *'Adon* ('lord'), *Melekh* ('king'), *Ba'al* ('owner' or 'possessor'). Polytheism as generally understood attempts to *define* the separate spheres of different deities, or assigns to them distinct functions. The Semite on the other hand had a strong sense of the presence of supernatural beings in particular spots, but it may be claimed for him that his conception of deity was relatively pure, inasmuch as it never apparently gave rise, as in Greece and Babylonia, to an exuberant mythology The titles ascribed to deity were for the most part vaguely descriptive, and even the plural word *'Elohim*, which may have been used to signify the totality of the divine denizens of a special place, was less usual than *'El*, which may have implied the notion of superhuman might[1].

Titles of Deity.

Little light has hitherto been thrown on the origin and growth of this undefined conception of deity. There are no clear traces of any earlier stage in Semitic religion; there is scarcely anything which points to any system of *totemism*[2], and but little that gives colour to the theory that the Semites originally worshipped deceased ancestors[3]. All that can be

[1] We are reminded of the beginnings of theological speculation in Greece. Cp. Arist. *de Anima*, I. 5, καὶ ἐν τῷ ὅλῳ δέ τινες αὐτὴν (sc. τὴν ψυχὴν) μεμῖχθαι φασιν, ὅθεν ἴσως καὶ Θαλῆς ᾠήθη πάντα πλήρη θεῶν εἶναι. On the meaning of *'El* and other primitive titles of deity see Dr Driver's *Book of Genesis*, excursus I. In no case is the meaning certain or clear.

[2] W. Robertson Smith, *op. cit.* pp. 117 foll. See also Kautzsch in *DB*, vol. v. p. 613.

[3] Piepenbring supports this idea, and suggests that the *terâphim* represented defunct ancestors (*Histoire du Peuple d'Israël*, p. 28). No particular inference can be drawn from passages in the O. T. which imply reverence for graves, mourning customs, and the use of necromantic arts (*e.g.* 1 Sam. xxviii. 13). The facts are collected by Piepenbring, *op. cit.* pp. 26 foll. Cp. Marti, *Gesch. der Isr. Rel.* p 24. Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 614 foll., questions the alleged indications of ancestor-worship in the O. T. Its existence in the pre-Mosaic period cannot (he thinks) be proved, and at any rate 'no consciousness of it survived to historical times.'

said is that in process of time the belief arose that the deity manifested in a particular locality was specially connected with the tribe inhabiting the district, standing to it in the definite and permanent relationship of parent, kinsman, or king. The god was supposed to inhabit the district as its 'lord' or 'owner' (*ba'al*) and the author of its fertility. He was regarded as a friendly being linked to his worshippers by the bond of kinship, and as forming with them a single community. It was in fact difficult for the primitive mind to conceive of a deity apart from some local habitation: for instance a mountain, like Horeb or Tabor, a fountain or well of 'living (*i.e.* running) water,' a prominent rock or tree. The particular object came to be regarded as the abode of deity—a spot where the god had already manifested himself and might therefore be continually approached by the clansmen to whom he was bound by the tie of kinship.

The Deity localised.

The earliest narratives of the Old Testament amply illustrate the fact that the worship of the primitive Hebrews was usually connected with certain sacred spots. The place where the god was, as it were, constantly and visibly present in some prominent natural object became a sanctuary, an appropriate scene for acts of worship. In the book of Genesis the patriarchs are described as offering sacrifices on sites where a theophany had occurred. Shechem, Beersheba, Mamre, Bethel thus became traditional 'holy' places. There the deity was supposed to reside, and there he was accessible to his worshippers. Sacrifice was accordingly offered or gifts were presented in such places, an animal victim being slain beside the sacred stone, cairn, or similar object, while the blood was poured out over it or at its base. Thus Jacob anoints his 'pillar' or pile of stones[1] at Bethel, and calls it the 'house of God.' Probably the most common form of sanctuary was a plot of ground within which stood a sacred stone, marking the scene of a theophany[2]. The stone was

[1] Gen. xxviii. 22. Cp. xxxv. 7.

[2] Cp. Judg. vi. 20; 1 Sam. vi. 14.

more than a pledge of the presence of the god; it was at once an outward embodiment of deity and an altar, and thus the act of anointing it was regarded as an actual means of coming into contact with the deity[1]. In later times the stone was occasionally replaced by a primitive altar of earth or stones, on which burnt-sacrifice could be offered, while at the same time a hewn pillar was erected as a visible emblem of the deity's presence.

Sacred trees and fountains.

In the same way *evergreen trees* were in primitive times looked upon as 'demonic' objects and therefore sacred. In a barren and thirsty soil such trees were a visible embodiment of creative and life giving power. We read of Abraham erecting his first altar in Canaan under a terebinth[2], already known as *'elon moreh* ('soothsayer's terebinth' or 'directing terebinth'), a tree supposed to give oracles, perhaps, by the rustling of its leaves[3], and in later times we find local sanctuaries either planted under green trees[4] or marked by artificial *'ashêrim* ('poles'), which were probably intended to replace trees. It was also natural that *wells* or *fountains* should be chosen as sanctuaries. From very ancient times such spots as 'En-mishpat, Beersheba, Dan, and 'En-rogel[5] were regarded as the abode of divine beings who caused the fertilising and healing waters to spring forth. 'The presence of living water in itself gave consecration to the place[6].' The fountain was honoured as a living being, a source of life, clothing the wilderness with verdure and making the barren soil fruitful. It is perhaps an accidental, but certainly a curious fact, that in the book of Genesis Abraham's acts of worship are

[1] Smend, p. 39.

[2] Gen. xii. 6. See Driver, *ad loc.* Cp. Deut. xi. 30; Judg. ix. 37.

[3] Cp. W. Robertson Smith, *op. cit.* p. 178. Obs. Tradition ascribed to Abraham the planting of a sacred tamarisk at Beersheba (Gen. xxi. 33). Cp. also Gen. xiii. 18.

[4] Cp. Josh. xxiv. 26.

[5] Gen. xiv. 7; Amos viii. 14; 1 Kings i. 9.

[6] Robertson Smith, *op. cit.* p. 155. Cp. Gen. xxvi. 19.

usually connected with trees, those of Jacob with stones, those of Isaac and Ishmael with wells or fountains.

Maṣṣêboth and 'Ashêrim.

So deeply imbued were the Semites with the idea of a connection between these particular objects and the presence of deity that in later times, as has been already noticed, they were replaced by artificial symbols which bore the same essential significance. We hear of *maṣṣêboth* and *'ashêrim* as recognised adjuncts of the worship of Jahveh even in the prophetic period. The *maṣṣêbah* (Arab. *noṣb*) was an artificial pillar or monumental stone, which served to mark the spot where deity had manifested itself. These pillars probably had a long history. Originally rude blocks of stone, placed upright, sufficed to mark the 'holiness' of a particular spot[1]. A circle of such stones was apparently erected by Joshua at Gilgal[2], and at Shechem, Mizpeh, Gibeon, and other places there existed in historic times monoliths or cairns which legend associated with some famous ancestor of the Hebrews.

At a later period pillars of wrought stone were substituted for the ancient cairn and came to be regarded as an indispensable feature in the sanctuaries at least of northern Israel[3]. Even the magnificent temple of Solomon was not held to be completely furnished until two pillars had been reared beside the entrance[4]. By untutored minds the stone or pillar might be actually identified with the deity[5]; but more commonly the *maṣṣêbah* was venerated as marking the scene of a theophany. On the same principle the *'ashêrah*, an upright pole, was substituted for the sacred tree, by way of symbolising the presence of the *numen* at the holy place. *'Ashêrim* are mentioned as a standing feature of the sanctuary in Samaria[6], and they were removed even from the temple at Jerusalem, first by Hezekiah

[1] Exod. xxiv. 4.
[2] Josh. iv. 20.
[3] Hos. iii. 4.
[4] 1 Kings vii. 21.
[5] This may be implied in such a passage as Jer. ii. 27.
[6] 2 Kings xiii. 6.

and afterwards by Josiah[1]. The writer of Deuteronomy in fact denounces them as relics of heathen superstition[2].

Use of images.

Besides the emblems already described it is probable that the ancient Semites occasionally used images in their worship. Such were the *terâphim* of which we read in the book of Genesis and elsewhere. These seem to have been partly at least of human form, and were probably venerated as household or tutelary gods. They may also have been used for oracular purposes[3]. The so-called *'ephod*, associated with *terâphim* by Hosea (iii. 4) and mentioned several times in the book of Judges, may have been a portable idol used in connection with the casting of lots[4]; but we cannot certainly trace the use of it to the most ancient period, and on the whole there is little evidence to show that actual idols were ordinary adjuncts of worship in the religion of the Semites, or indeed of other ancient peoples. Primitive man was content to mark the sacredness of a spot by means of an unwrought stone, cairn, or post, and out of this usage the *cultus* of idols seems to have been developed at a more advanced stage of thought[5]. It is therefore open to question whether the representation of Jahveh under the image of an ox or bull can be traced to the most primitive times, especially when it is considered that the nomads of the desert were not in the habit of breeding cattle[6].

[1] 2 Kings xviii. 4, xxiii. 6.

[2] Deut. xii. 3, xvi. 21. On some interesting points connected with the later use of *'ashêrim* see Robertson Smith, *op. cit.* pp. 172 note, 175 note.

[3] Gen. xxxi. 19; Judg. xvii. 5; 1 Sam. xix. 13, 16; Ezek. xxi. 21; Zech. x. 2. Some have inferred from Exod. xxi. 6 that private houses in later times had near the door an *'Elohim* or 'family god'; but Deut. xv. 17 gives no support to this idea.

[4] Judg. viii. 27, xvii. 5, etc. Cp. 1 Sam. xxi. 9. On *'ephod* see Smend, p. 41.

[5] See *Encyc. Bibl.* art. 'Idolatry.'

[6] Among some Semitic peoples (*e.g.* the Assyrians and Phoenicians) the *serpent* seems to have been held in special reverence. See Baudissin, *Studien zur Semit. Religionsgeschichte*, vol. i. pp. 257 foll.

Mode of worship.

In regard to actual rites or forms of worship something can be gathered from the developed practice of later times. The spot where a god was supposed to dwell was in any case a 'holy' place, *i.e.* it was separated from all profane use and set apart for acts of worship. The presence of deity was acknowledged by such usages as those of removing the shoes when treading the sacred enclosure, changing or washing the garments, veiling the head, cleansing the body by special ablutions, etc. In the earliest times the sacred stone or cairn was anointed with liquid offerings, oil, water, or the fat of a victim, this being the simplest mode in which the gift of the worshippers could be conveyed to the deity. A more highly developed form of sacrifice doubtless consisted in the presentation of food[1] or of vegetable first-fruits. Animal sacrifices offered by fire mark a more advanced stage in religion, when for the rude stone or cairn originally employed an altar of earth or of unhewn stones was substituted[2], serving as a table on which a meal might be spread before the deity[3]. The original altar among the Semites was simply a great stone or cairn at which victims were slain, and over or against which was poured out the sacrificial blood, as the appropriate share of the deity. The real import of a bloody sacrifice was that it symbolised and was supposed to effect the closest sacramental union between the deity and his worshippers[4] The same significance belongs to the occasional application of the life-blood to the worshipper as well as to the sacred stone or altar[5]; by this means, or by the partition of the victim

[1] Cp. Judg. vi. 19. [2] Cp. Exod. xx. 24, 25.

[3] 'Altar' (מִזְבֵּחַ) means properly 'place of slaughter' (זבח), and the use of the altar as a table on which a meal was presented to deity was apparently later than the use of it as an object over or at which the blood of a victim was shed. See Robertson Smith, *op. cit.* pp. 184 foll., and cp. such passages as 1 Sam. xiv. 32 foll. with the descriptions of later ritual in Lev. iii. 3, iv. 7.

[4] Cp. Num. xxv. 3, 5. [5] Exod. xxiv. 6, 8.

between the offerer and the deity, or again by the passing of both parties between the divided portions of the flesh, a covenant-bond was cemented, or, if broken, restored[1]. The sacrifice was in fact the necessary preliminary to a meal, which was itself a token of fellowship—a social act in which the deity and his tribesmen or the individual worshipper sealed their fellowship and symbolically expressed a community of interests.

Burnt-sacrifice.

The use of fire for the consumption of sacrificial offerings was apparently of later origin. It had a history which it is needless to investigate for our present purpose. But it is noteworthy that the disposal by burning of the victim's flesh, as a thing too 'holy' to be consumed by man, led to a change both in the significance of the altar, and in the *locale* of the sanctuary. From being originally the place of slaughter the altar came to be a hearth for the consumption of the victim by fire, and this change probably led to the choice of 'high places' (*bâmoth*), *i.e.* the bare hill-tops near to cities, as suitable spots for disposing of the victim. Thus the 'high places' of the Semites were originally places of burnt-sacrifice, and they naturally tended to become the chief sanctuaries, furnished with the usual apparatus of *'ashêrim* and *maṣṣêboth*. This change is implied in the accounts of the offering of Isaac and of the burnt-sacrifice of Gideon[2]. Further illustrations of the primitive custom in this matter are furnished by the example of David, who selected an elevated spot for the temple, and also by the fact that the Syrians in the reign of Ahab took it for granted that the deities of Israel were 'gods of the hills[3].'

Human sacrifice.

Sacrifice being so potent a means of restoring or confirming the bond that united a deity to his tribe, it was natural that in times of distress or anxiety, when a sacrifice of peculiar efficacy seemed to be required, a human victim should be employed. That human

[1] Cp. Gen. xv. 9 foll.; Jer. xxxiv. 18.

[2] Gen. xxii. 2 foll.; Judg. vi. 26. [3] 1 Kings xx. 23.

sacrifice was not unknown in primitive times may be gathered from the express prohibition of it in the Mosaic law, and from the ancient tradition embodied in the story of the offering of Isaac[1]. The practice is also probably implied in the redemption of the firstborn[2]. The custom of offering human sacrifice evidently prevailed among the heathen neighbours of Israel[3], and the story of Jephthah's daughter, together with various allusions in the prophetic writings, shows that it lingered long even among the Hebrews[4]. In degenerate times, during the reigns of kings like Ahaz and Manasseh, the feeling of abhorrence at such practices was apt to grow weak, and hence there was a tendency to revive the old heathen rite in the declining days of the monarchy; but the conviction, fostered by the prophets, that such barbarities were incompatible with the religion of Jahveh manifested itself in the fact that human sacrifices were never offered in the Temple-courts, but in the gloomy valley of Hinnom, south-west of Jerusalem[5].

Sacred seasons.

Whether there were any stated feasts among the primitive Semites is perhaps doubtful; but it is not improbable that the later *Passover* represented an ancient solar or astronomical feast, connected with the sacrifice of the firstlings of the flock and herd. It may have been originally observed in times of pestilence, the blood being employed to secure the favour of the tribal deity and immunity from the plague[6]. The feast of the *new moon*

[1] Levit. xviii. 21, xx. 2; Deut. xii. 31, xviii. 10; Gen. xxii. (on which see Driver's appended note).

[2] Exodus xiii. 13, 15.

[3] *e.g.* the Moabites (2 Kings iii. 27).

[4] Judg. xi. 34 foll. Cp. Mic. vi. 7; Jer. vii. 31, xix. 5. Such sacrifices are mentioned as enormities committed by ungodly kings, like Ahaz and Manasseh. Consider also Ezek. xvi. 20, 21; xx. 31 'even unto this day.'

[5] See 2 Chr. xxviii. 3, xxxiii. 6; 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

[6] The observance of some such ancient tribal festival is implied in Exod. v. 3, viii. 26, and x. 9. The sprinkling of the doorposts (Exod. xii. 22) may have been a reminiscence of the custom of anointing the household *'elôhim* with blood. See Marti, *Geschichte*, p. 41.

and the institution of the *Sabbath* were probably features in ancient Semitic religion. Both of these would be connected with the fact that the phases of the moon were specially observed by nomadic shepherds, and it is significant that the worship of *Sin*, the moon-god, was a peculiar feature of Semitic paganism. There are also indications that the occasion of *sheep-shearing* was celebrated as a festival[1].

Sacred customs.

There can be little doubt that the chief sacred customs of later times already existed in a germinal form in the pre-historic age, for example, abstinence from blood and repugnance to the use of certain animals as food. The practice of *circumcision* was certainly common among the Semites, as among non-Semitic peoples. There is evidence of its observance among the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Phoenicians. It seems to have been originally a social rite marking the stage when a youth was admitted to full membership in his tribe and to participation in its worship. Circumcision was in fact not only a tribal badge, but a *blood-rite*, which had the effect of bringing the individual clansman into fellowship with the tribal deity[2]. It is not clear from the Old Testament when the observance first became definitely connected with the worship of Jahveh. In certain passages of his book the prophet Jeremiah seems to disparage its importance[3], and at any rate it was not till post-exilic times that it became an indispensable requirement for every son of Israel. Among other ancient usages may be mentioned the habit of consulting the deity in doubtful or difficult emergencies. The god was regarded as the giver of advice, and of judicial sentences in matters of dispute. The

[1] Cp. Gen. xxxi. 9, xxxviii. 12; 1 Sam. xxv.

[2] Exod. iv. 24 foll. seems to imply the idea that blood-shedding restores union with the deity, and protects from his wrath. The same passage points to the connection of circumcision with marriage, for which it was a kind of preparation. See Driver, *Book of Genesis*, pp. 189 foll.

[3] See Jerem. iv. 4, vi. 10, ix. 25. Cp. Deut. x. 16, etc.

sanctuary became the natural seat of justice; thus the name '*En-mishpat*, 'spring of judgment,' points to the existence of a primitive tribunal beside a sacred fountain[1]. In the 'Book of the Covenant' justice is administered before the *'elôhim* doubtless by some 'holy' person, priest or seer, who probably made use of the sacred lot[2].

Social and moral characteristics.

It remains to say something of the social and moral peculiarities of this primitive age in the history of the Semites. We must bear in mind that the general conditions of nomadic life are apt to be singularly uniform, and are therefore unfavourable to culture or to rapid intellectual progress. The pastoral life naturally tends to a habit of indolence, while the relatively low position of women and the practice of polygamy lead to domestic jealousies, which sow the seeds of discord and disunion among the children. Among primitive men the wife is merely one of the principal chattels, standing on a level little higher than that of the ox, the ass, the horse, and the slave. Marriage takes the form of a bargain or covenant with the bride's father[3]. The *status* of the wife is practically that of a superior slave, and her rights are as yet non-existent; divorce depends on the husband's pleasure[4]. Similarly the power of the *pater-familias* is absolute; he can sell his children into slavery; can choose for each a wife or husband; can actually devote them to the tribal god as sacrificial victims[5]. In fact among the Semites, as among the ancient Romans and other peoples, 'the family was based, less upon actual relationship than upon power[6];...what we call property, what we call marital right, what we call parental authority, were all originally blended in the general conception of patriarchal power[6].'

[1] Gen. xiv. 7.
[2] Exod. xxii. 8.
[3] Gen. xxix. 18, 27, xxxiv. 12.
[4] Deut. xxiv. 1—4.
[5] Exod. xxi. 7; Gen. xxiv. 3, xxii.
[6] Maine, *Early Institutions*, pp. 312, 313; cp. the same writer's *Ancient Law*, chap. 5.

The law of *blood-revenge* is an immemorial custom of the East. It corresponds to the intensity of the Semitic nomad's devotion to his tribe. Only as a member of a clan was he assured of maintenance and protection. Among the Semites the murder of a clansman was an offence not only against the tribe, but against the god whose interests and possessions were identical with those of his clan, and who was indissolubly bound up with its collective life[1]. Blood-revenge was indeed the only way open to primitive society of protecting the life of individuals against the lawless passion or arbitrary violence of their fellows. That there was no moral principle underlying the primitive institution of blood-revenge is plain from the fact that no distinction seems to have been made in pre-Mosaic times between murder and unintentional homicide. *Slavery* in one form or another was of course a recognised institution, as is evident from the regulation of it in the 'Book of the Covenant.' Slaves were procured through war, and were apparently kept in perpetual servitude; but members of a clan who had been sold into slavery were only retained by their owner for a certain number of years, unless they themselves consented to serve in perpetuity. In such a case the slave was brought to the sanctuary and formally made over to his master[2]. *Levirate marriage* was also in all probability a primitive institution, but it seems very precarious to connect it, as some writers have done, with the custom of ancestor-worship, as if it were an expedient for maintaining the rites due to the dead[3]. One motive of its observance in historic times was the desire to guard family property from alienation[4].

[1] This is the point of Gen. ix. 6. Cp. Smend, p. 23.

[2] Exod. xxi. 2—6. Cp. Deut. xv. 12 foll. Exod. *l.c.* has been thought to imply that the slave was brought to the door of the dwelling—the spot where the family *'elôhim* were erected—as a token that he accepted as his own the god of his master's family. Some such ceremony may have been customary in pagan times.

[3] See *e.g.* Marti, *op. cit.* § 12, and on the other side Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 615.

[4] Ruth iv. 5.

We may notice at this point the only 'class distinction' which was observed by the primitive Semites. There seem to have been recognised 'holy' persons, attached to the sacred enclosure which contained the shrine of a god or the emblem of his presence. The function of these 'priests' was to declare the will of the deity, to pronounce his decision on points of difficulty, and to give advice or instruction in his name, by using the lot or by consulting the oracle in other ways. A trace of such a class is to be found in such names as 'soothsayer's terebinth' and 'terebinth of the enchanters[1].' Priesthood in its more developed sense—the function of offering sacrifice on behalf of a family or clan—belonged of right to its head or to chosen representatives[2]. At the same time there are traces among the Semites of the practice of confining the functions of priesthood to a particular clan or family. Considering the important place of prophecy in historic times it is also probable that the ancient Semites had their 'seers,' whose function it is not easy to distinguish from that of the priesthood[3], except by saying that the priests were in a sense permanent while the seers were occasional interpreters of the divine will.

Holy persons, priests and seers.

We may now briefly survey the ground we have traversed in this chapter.

In reading the Old Testament we should carefully note those ancient usages which were recognised, and in some cases regulated, by the Mosaic religion, or which held their ground alongside of it or even in defiance of it. Such usages justify us in assuming that the Hebrews inherited a certain body of religious ideas and

Summary.

[1] Gen. xii. 6; Judg. ix. 37. The functions of the earliest priesthood are implied in passages like Deut. xxxiii. 8 and 1 Sam. xiv. 41.

[2] Exod. xxiv. 5.

[3] Smend, p. 20, remarks that in Arabic the word *kâhin* 'seer' corresponds to the Heb. *kôhen* 'priest,' 'but,' he adds, 'priest and seer were originally the same person.' Cp. McNeile, *The book of Exodus*, intr. pp. lxiv foll.

practices in common with their heathen neighbours We may gather from these fragmentary hints the type of worship and ethics which Mosaism endeavoured either to correct or to repress. We must of course remember that the Old Testament picture of the patriarchal age in Israel's history projects into a far-distant past the beliefs and customs of a comparatively civilised period, but we cannot be wrong in supposing that those features of the picture which imply a very elementary state of social morality are really primitive[1]. A somewhat low conception of the position of woman, a spirit of cunning and revenge displayed in the mutual dealings of tribes or individuals—these are the darker elements in the picture. On the other hand, a general fidelity to covenant-obligations, a marked respect for the rights of property and for the marriage bond, a strong sense of the inviolable sacredness of fellowship in the same clan—these are features to which a parallel can be found in the characteristics of nomad races in every part of the world.

As regards religious usage, it will have appeared that to the ancient Semites worship was mainly a matter of customary observance. A man found himself, as a member of a clan or tribe, already closely bound to some particular deity whose favour could be secured, or his displeasure averted, only by a rigid fulfilment of prescribed and traditional ceremonies. All ordinary usages and customs of tribal life must have been very closely connected with religion, and many traditional practices and modes of thought were doubtless retained by the Hebrews even at a time when the animism or the nature-worship to which they owed their origin was 'completely overmastered by the fundamental ideas of a higher religion[2].'

[1] In primitive times 'there is no such thing as acting upon conscious moral principles; and hence there is no thought of *morality* properly so called, but *custom* exercises a powerful influence, which no one can disregard with impunity.' Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 624.

[2] Schultz, *op. cit.* vol. I. p. 117.

The patriarchs.

Of this preliminary stage in Hebrew religion the patriarchs may be regarded as types. Abraham in particular can scarcely be looked upon as the personal founder of a pure religion of revelation. He is rather the prototype of all that is highest in the old Semitic religion—of all that was best fitted to serve as a foundation for a great moral and religious development[1]. Abraham is in fact a representative of Semitism in two points especially: in his strong consciousness of God, and in the impulse which moved him to separate himself from an alien and more highly developed civilisation. He is the pastoral chief whose life of wandering in the desert has imbued him with a sense of the irresistible power which lies behind the rugged and stern phenomena of nature amid which his lot is cast[2]. In a spirit of awe, of receptivity, of submission to the leadings of his God, he passes from land to land, dwelling in tents, rearing his altar for sacrifice beneath the open sky, shunning the tumult of cities, and sojourning in the broad and silent spaces of the wilderness. This tendency to withdraw from the centres of civilisation and to prefer a life of primitive simplicity is illustrated by the narrative of the 'call of Abraham[3].' Such deliberate abandonment of the idolatrous and highly-developed culture of Babylon is typical of the moral intensity of the pastoral Semites. It marked them out as the people of revelation. It separated them from the corruptions of polytheism. It was what the New Testament represents it to be—an act of faith in which was involved the possibility of a special

[1] Smend regards the figures of the patriarchs as personifications of Israel (p. 27). There can be indeed no doubt that the moral traits of their descendants are ascribed to the patriarchs, and even Israel's later experiences in relation to neighbouring peoples seem to be consciously foreshadowed in the patriarchal narratives (*ib.* p. 98).

[2] To Abraham God is known as *'El Shaddai*, Gen. xvii. 1; Exod. vi. 3 (P). Cp. the name *Zurishaddai* in Num. i. 6.

[3] Gen. xii. 1 foll.; Isai. li. 2. Cp. Judg. v. 5—9.

and unique relationship to God. The name of Abraham thus stands for a symbol of the fact that in the soil of a purely natural religion, the Divine Spirit was at work from the beginning, awakening a higher consciousness of God, and laying the foundation of a movement which was destined to find its climax in the perfect union of man with God in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORK AND INFLUENCE OF MOSES.

We have seen reasons for supposing that the primitive religion of the Hebrew tribes resembled in the main that of other Semitic peoples; but in the earliest traditions we find indications that while the religion of other nations on the whole tended downwards towards some form of polytheism or nature-worship, the forefathers of the Hebrews were continually advancing towards a higher, purer, and more simple faith—faith in a Deity who is both personal and righteous; who is willing to enter into covenant with man and to raise him into the life of conscious fellowship with God. The intermediate stages between the 'patriarchal' period and the departure of the tribes from Egypt it is impossible to trace. What is certain is that at the period when the Hebrews invaded Palestine and drove out or subdued its Canaanitish inhabitants the tribes were united, not only by the ties of kinship, but by their common belief in a Deity called Jahveh, and that this religion possessed elements of strength which welded the loosely-organised clans into a compact nation, and ultimately gave them a decided superiority over the Canaanites who opposed their advance. We find moreover that this type of religion held its ground after the settlement of the Hebrews in the conquered territory, and that it was tenacious and vigorous enough to withstand the disintegrating influences of heathenism to which it was exposed.

To what is this striking development to be attributed? The uniform tradition of the Hebrews points to certain important historical events as the occasion, and to one commanding personality as the instrument, whereby the change was brought about. According to the narratives of the Pentateuch, the tribes migrated into Egypt and were for some centuries settled in that country. Though at first they found favour with the Egyptian monarchs, yet in process of time they sank into a condition of serfdom, which lasted until they were goaded by their sufferings to rise against their oppressors and to claim their liberty. Under the leadership of Moses, of the tribe of Levi, they made their escape from Egypt, and for more than a generation wandered as nomads in the Sinaitic peninsula[1]. Tradition also relates that the tribes were taught by Moses the elements of a higher religion than that which they had inherited from their ancestors, and that he was the founder of a rudimentary system of law and polity. According to the earliest account, Moses was specially commissioned by God to be the liberator and lawgiver of his fellow-tribesmen; he spoke with the authority of a prophet[2], and acted as mediator between the Hebrews and their God in the character of a priest.

The Hebrew tradition.

In spite of some fanciful and ingenious theories it may be confidently asserted, without insisting too strongly on particular details, that some such chain of events, the existence of some such personality, is absolutely required to explain the subsequent development of Israel's religion. The departure of the Hebrews from Egypt marks the point at which the political

[1] Smend holds that only a few thousands of Hebrews were actually settled in Goshen, and that in the Sinaitic peninsula these amalgamated with kindred and friendly tribes. Thus was developed a national and not merely tribal consciousness (p. 32). This might account for the fact (see below) that the name of Jahveh was not altogether strange to the Hebrews. He was possibly worshipped already by part of the tribes.

[2] Cp. Hos. xii. 13.

and religious life of Israel may be said to begin; and the personality of Moses is by all reasonable criticism accepted as an assured historical reality[1]. Indeed, the leading events of the history, as Hebrew tradition relates them, seem to be necessarily presupposed in the state of things described or implied in the book of Judges[2].

A word of explanation is necessary touching the character of the sources from which our knowledge of Moses and his work is derived.

The sources.

The last four books of the Pentateuch contain certain historical narratives and a considerable mass of legal matter. The oldest narratives, those of the Jahvist (J) and the Elohist (E), seem to belong respectively to the ninth and eighth centuries B.C., and were probably combined into a single work about the middle of the seventh century B.C. The 'priestly' narrative (P), though historical in form, is for the most part consciously intended to illustrate certain religious ideas, and to account for the origin of certain laws and institutions peculiar to the later Judaism. It is usually held to have been compiled at the close of the sixth or early in the fifth century. Of these sources J is obviously the oldest, and most nearly represents the ancient popular tradition concerning the events of the exodus; but it must be borne in mind that both J and E are parted by a gulf of some centuries from the incidents which they record, and in point of fact embody the

[1] For present purposes it makes little difference whether we accept the Hebrew tradition as it has been uniformly explained hitherto, or whether we adopt the 'advanced hypothesis' of Winckler, Cheyne, and others, that the true land of מצרים, from which the exodus occurred, was not Egypt (*Miṣraim*) at all, but a N. Arabian land called *Muṣr* or *Muṣir*. Very few, if any, of the distinctive features of Hebrew religion can be plausibly traced to Egyptian influence, and even if the *Muṣir* theory could be satisfactorily established, it would not affect the tradition respecting the epoch-making work of Moses. For a recent defence of the theory see Dr Winckler's paper in the *Hibbert Journal* for April, 1904.

[2] Smend, p. 16.

ideas of a late age respecting Moses and his work. The main facts, however, are sufficiently clear. The political consolidation of the Hebrew tribes was inseparably connected with the origin of their religion. The superiority of this religion over the debased heathenism of Canaan is incontestably proved by the actual conquest. Before they were welded into a single nation, the religion of the Hebrews must have more or less closely resembled that of their Semitic kinsfolk. When they invaded and occupied Palestine their religion did not indeed so far triumph as to completely oust the *cultus* of the Canaanitish deities, but at least it maintained itself amid the corruptions of the surrounding heathenism, and the secret of its power is manifest. The characteristic feature of the religion of Jahveh was that it connected religion with morality; it represented the tribal Deity of the Hebrews as at once a God of power and a God of righteousness[1].

Origin of Mosaism.

The question has naturally been raised whether Israel's religion owed any of its distinctive features to Egypt or to Midian, with both of which countries Moses was traditionally connected. At present little or no evidence is forthcoming in favour of either alternative. The available facts, indeed, tend to confirm the truth of the account given in the Old Testament itself, that the religion taught by Moses was imparted to him by Divine revelation. Doubtless he found in the ancestral beliefs of the Hebrews the necessary basis for his teaching; but the simplest explanation of his commanding influence is to be found in the fact that he was a prophet, divinely chosen, inspired, and prepared for his task, and sent to the Hebrews with an authoritative message from the God of their fathers. The work of Moses was, indeed, in the strict sense 'prophetic.' He proclaimed the sovereignty of God and declared His purpose of grace. From the first there was an *ethical* tendency in his teaching and an

[1] Cp. Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 48.

element of expansiveness. The religion of a family or of a clan became under his guidance the faith of an entire people; and the keynotes of the system were practically two: first, the exaltation of Jahveh, the deliverer of the Hebrews from bondage, as the one Deity of their allegiance; second, the insistence upon social righteousness as His one essential requirement.

The name JAHVEH.

A single Divine name was proclaimed as the watchword of the religion taught by Moses. It was a name, not merely proclaimed, but revealed, and like other Hebrew names it was indicative of a character. Such titles as *'Elôhim*, *'El 'Elyon*, *'El Shaddai* have been correctly described as 'names preceding revelation[1].' They imply an advance on mere animism, in so far as they suggest the combination of various spiritual forces or beings into a unity[2]; but the name by which God now manifested Himself to Israel was a personal name, and revealed certain attributes of Deity.

The source whence the name Jahveh was derived has been a much-disputed point. The most probable account of it is that it was a name of God already current, either in the family of Moses himself[3] or (as Wellhausen has conjectured) in the tribe of Joseph[4]. It is unlikely that the tribes would have accepted a designation which was entirely strange and unfamiliar. The name may have been already known in the Semitic peninsula (*e.g.* among the nomadic Kenites, or among some Hebrew tribes which had not migrated into Egypt), and

[1] Davidson, *Theology of the O. T.* p. 45.

[2] For a recent discussion of these names see Driver's *Book of Genesis*, pp. 404 foll. Observe that the Christian conception of God gathers up the truths implied in these titles when it acknowledges one God, *τὸν πολυώνυμον καὶ παντοδύναμον καὶ μονοειδῆ τὴν ὑπόστασιν* (Cyr. Hieros. *Catech.* VI. 7).

[3] Cp. the name of the mother of Moses, Jochebed, Exod. vi. 20 (P), which may mean 'Jahveh is [my tribe's] glory.' (So Cheyne in *Enc. Bib.*)

[4] This supposition falls in with the fact (*a*) that at a later period we find the ark in possession of that tribe, (*b*) that the earliest composite name in which 'Jahveh' is an element appears to be 'Joshua' or 'Jehoshua.'

thus Moses could announce to the Hebrews that he was sent to them by the God of their fathers[1].

Again, the derivation and exact meaning of the name are quite uncertain. In the celebrated passage, Exod. iii. 14, the word is connected with the Hebrew verb meaning *to be* or *become*, a fact which at least indicates, if not the original sense of the title, yet the ideas which it commonly suggested.

Meaning of the name.

As regards its form, the word appears to be the third person singular imperfect of the archaic form *havah* (for *hayah*), in either *Hiphil* or *Qal*. It might thus mean either

(1) 'He who creates,' 'causes to be,' or possibly 'brings things to pass'; or (much more probably)

(2) 'He who will be,' *i.e.* the 'eternal' or 'constant' being who will progressively manifest Himself in future history as Israel's Creator and Redeemer[2]. This is evidently the *traditional* explanation implied in Exod. iii. 14. The name was intended to express not what God is in Himself, but rather what He was in relation to Israel: a personal being willing to enter into covenant with man and to reveal Himself progressively as occasion might demand; a being self-consistent and faithful in fulfilling His threatenings and promises; able, moreover, to control the course of history in fulfilment of His purpose of grace. The name by its very vagueness implies that 'no words can sum up all that Jahveh will be to His people[3].'

Whatever be the precise import of the title, it is certain

[1] Exod. iii. 6, 15, iv. 5. Cp. Smend, p. 17 anm. The 'Kenite hypothesis' is regarded as improbable by Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 626.

[2] This is preferable to the suggestion that the word is connected (*a*) with the Arab. *hawah*, 'blow' or 'breathe,' and that *Jahveh* is the god heard in the tempest, the 'storm god'; or (*b*) with *hawah* in the sense of 'to fall' (Job xxxvii. 6), causative 'to overthrow' or 'prostrate,' *Jahveh* being 'the destroyer,' 'the lightning god.' See Marti, *Geschichte*, etc., § 17, and Driver, *Book of Genesis*, pp. 407 foll. Kautzsch in *DB*, v. 626 examines the alternative suggestions at some length

[3] W. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, lect. ii. note 10.

that Moses proclaimed Jahveh to his people as their God—'the God of the Hebrews.' *From the land of Egypt*[1] onwards and throughout their history Jahveh was *the God of Israel.* In the events of the exodus He had manifested at once His power and His grace: His superiority to the gods of heathendom[2], and His willingness to redeem an enslaved people in order to unite them by a covenantal bond to Himself. This truth was the foundation-stone of the religion taught by Moses.

Primitive conceptions of Jahveh.

We must not suppose that the conception of Jahveh held by the mass of the Hebrews was of a very lofty character. He was probably conceived as having a human form, capable of being represented in carved or molten images. He was feared and honoured as a powerful personality[3], able to intervene in history on Israel's behalf, and having a sole claim on its allegiance. At the same time in accordance with the primitive Semitic idea that the god and his clan formed a single community, He was regarded as a tribal or national deity. Jahveh was to the Hebrews what Chemosh was to the Moabites—their protector, and the champion of their interests. In time of peace He was their ruler and judge, the fountain of justice and the guardian of sacred custom[4]. In warfare He was their leader; Israel's enemies were His enemies, and their victories were His[5]. The question as to the existence or non-existence

[1] Hos. xiii. 4. [2] Exod. xv. 11.

[3] The truth of the Divine personality is emphasised by the frequent use of anthropomorphic language, especially in connection with the name *Jahveh.* Cp. Riehm, *ATl. Theologie*, § 11. 3.

[4] The similarity between the conception of Jahveh prevalent in Israel and that of Chemosh among the Moabites is well illustrated by the inscription of Mesha on the 'Moabite Stone.' See Hastings' *DB*, *s.v.* 'Moab, Moabites.'

[5] Judg. v. 31; 1 Sam. xxx. 26. With this idea is also connected the law of the 'devoted thing' (חרם), Lev. xxvii. 28 foll. Cp. Num. xviii. 14; Josh. vii. 1, 11. Jahveh is regarded as 'a man of war' (Exod. xv. 3;

of other gods who stood in the same relation to other tribes as Jahveh to Israel, was not raised at this period. Jahveh differed from other gods in respect of His superior might. None could be compared with Him in wonder-working power. It remained for Moses to teach that Jahveh was separated from the gods of the heathen by another point of distinction: namely the fact that he was a God of *righteousness*.

The ark.

There are evident tokens of the survival of other crude ideas among the Hebrews. It was popularly supposed that Jahveh had His abode on Mount Sinai[1], or at least that He was specially connected with the wilderness[2], though not absolutely tied to one spot. He could visit the enslaved people in Egypt, could lead their hosts out of *the house of bondage*, and fight for them in their battles[3]. His presence in the midst of Israel might be manifested in various modes. He promises that his *presence* (lit. *face*) shall go with Israel[4]; he sends His angel (*mal'akh*) before His people—the being in whom His Name is, *i.e.* in whom He visibly manifests Himself[5]. The *ark of Jahveh* (or *ark of God*) is practically identified with Jahveh Himself; it acts as a guide in the wilderness and is apparently venerated by friends and foes alike as the place of His abode[6]. It has been supposed,

cp. Num. x. 35), and probably the very name 'Israel' means ''El persists.' The same idea underlies the 'holiness' of the camp (Deut. xxiii. 14), and of the warriors. Cp. the phrase for opening a war 'to consecrate war' (Jer. vi. 4, li. 27; Joel iii. 9; cp. Isai. xiii. 3).

[1] Smend (p. 30) gives reasons for thinking that this idea was very ancient and deep-rooted. He finds a trace of its survival even in 1 Kings xix. 8 foll.

[2] Cp. Exod. v. 3; Judg. v. 4, 5; Deut. xxxiii. 2.

[3] Exod. xvii. 14 foll.; Num. xxi. 14.

[4] Exod. xxxiii. 12—15 (J).

[5] Exod. xxiii. 21. The 'angel' like the 'presence' implies a form of manifestation which does not, however, exhaust the fulness of Jahveh's being.

[6] See Num. x. 33—36. So in the crossing of Jordan (Josh. iv.) and in the siege of Jericho (Josh. vi.) the ark takes a prominent place. That it

with scarcely sufficient reason, that the ark originally contained an image of Jahveh, or at least a block of sacred stone (*bêtêl*), either meteoritic or hewn at Sinai, and serving as a symbol of the Deity's presence[1]. In any case, the idea of Jahveh as localised in the ark, or moving to and fro with the Israelites by means of the *presence* or the *angel*, corresponds to a rudimentary stage in Israel's faith, a stage in which the personal action of the Deity cannot be conceived apart from some mode of bodily and local presence. After the settlement in Palestine Jahveh was believed to have taken up His abode in the new territory, and gradually, as men's thoughts of God became less materialistic, the idea prevailed that Israel's God was not restricted either to Sinai or to the sacred ark[2].

The God of Israel.

Whatever may have been Israel's conception of its Deity, it learned from Moses, and held fast the belief, that this powerful God had deigned to do great things on its behalf and to enter into a covenant-relationship with it. Israel henceforth realised that it belonged to Jahveh, and felt itself bound to serve and obey Him only. By a gracious act of deliverance Jahveh had brought the Hebrews to Himself and had become their lawgiver and king. He had chosen them for His peculiar people in order to manifest to them His nature and His will. This relationship of Jahveh to His people was thought of as twofold. Jahveh was the *father* of Israel, not in a moral, physical sense, but in the sense that by His redemptive acts of power He had formed the nation and brought it into existence. He was also honoured

implied the presence of Jahveh especially as the *war god* is shown by 1 Sam. iv. 7 (cp. 2 Sam. v. 21). See also 2 Sam. vi. 2, where (as elsewhere) the ark is mentioned in connection with the name 'Jahveh of hosts.'

[1] The ark was doubtless a very primitive adjunct of the worship of Jahveh, and the close connection of the *mal'akh* with the ark seems to show that the idea of the 'angel' belongs to the period preceding the conquest of Canaan. We meet with it already in the Song of Deborah (Judg. v. 23).

[2] For a sketch of the later history of the ark see Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 629.

as Israel's *king*, to whom the tribes might look for help in battle, for counsel in difficult emergencies, and for a judicial sentence in cases too hard for human decision. This relationship was established at the time of the exodus; in the conquest of Palestine it was renewed and confirmed. Accordingly it was required on Israel's side that Jahveh alone should be worshipped as king and lord, and in the idea of Jahveh's *jealousy* we have the germ of true monotheism. The charter of the covenant between Israel and its God is virtually contained in the first 'word' of the decalogue[1].

Jahveh's moral requirement.

On the other hand, it was a cardinal doctrine of Moses that Israel was bound, in virtue of its position as a covenant-people, to render to Jahveh the acceptable service of a *moral* obedience. Jahveh was before everything else a God of righteousness, the champion of right against might, the protector of the helpless and poor[2], requiring of His chosen people the observance of a moral law, and punishing moral transgression both in nations and individuals. In this ethical conception of Jahveh we have the central feature of the religion of Moses. The statements of the prophets imply that the distinctive *torah* or 'direction' of Moses did not deal mainly with matters of ritual. It was concerned with moral obedience[3]; it laid down broad principles of morality, such as those which are embodied in the decalogue. Assuming that the 'Book of the Covenant' (Exod. xxi.—xxiii.) contains at any rate a nucleus of Mosaic enactments, which were afterwards expanded or revised to suit the conditions of a

[1] Amos ii. 9, iii. 1; Hos. ii. 16, xi. 1, xii. 13, xiii. 4, 5. Obs. The Pentateuchal tradition is that a *covenant* was really made at Sinai between God and Israel. There is, as Kautzsch shows, no convincing reason for setting this tradition aside. The account in Exod. xxiv. 4—8 (J) is very explicit, and the whole subsequent history implies that after the exodus the people acknowledged Jahveh as their God and bound themselves to do His will.

[2] Exod. xxii. 22 foll.

[3] Jer. vii. 22. Cp. Exod. xv. 26.

later stage in the nation's career, we may describe the code as based on the central idea that Jahveh Himself is Israel's king and judge, and that His chief requirement is that of justice tempered by humanity[1]. 'The law of Israel,' says Professor Robertson Smith in an admirable summary, 'does not yet aim at singularity; it is enough that it is pervaded by a constant sense that the righteous and gracious Jehovah is behind the law and wields it in conformity with His own holy nature. The law, therefore, makes no pretence at ideality. It contains precepts adapted, as our Lord puts it, to the hardness of the people's heart. The ordinances are not abstractly perfect and fit to be a rule of life in every state of society, but they are fit to make Israel a righteous, humane, and God-fearing people, and to facilitate a healthy growth towards better things[2].'

The decalogue.

It may fairly be questioned whether the decalogue in its present form can be ascribed to Moses. In the first place, what appears to be an older and widely different version of the 'ten words' is found in the book of Exodus (ch. xxxiv. 14—26); secondly, the decalogue in its present form seems to be influenced by the teaching of the eighth-century prophets[3]. It is also urged that an exclusively *moral* code is not consistent with the predominantly ritualistic character of early religions. Other arguments have

[1] The 'Book of the Covenant' perhaps represents the original *torah* of Moses developed to suit the new conditions of agricultural life. It gives a correct idea of the *spirit* of the Mosaic *torah*.

[2] *The O. T. in the Jewish Church*, p. 343. On the relation of the Mosaic code to that of the Babylonian Ḥammurabi, see the exhaustive article by Mr Johns in *DB*, v., esp. pp. 608 foll.

[3] Thus the Mosaic origin of the *second* word is disputed on the ground that image-worship was not definitely prohibited by Elijah and Elisha, and was first denounced by the prophets in the 8th century. As Schultz remarks, it 'will always remain impossible to explain how the worship of God by means of images—the unopposed custom in all Israel before the time of Solomon and in the northern kingdom till its fall—can be reconciled with the hypothesis of such a fundamental law being in existence' (*O. T. Theology*, I. 219). See McNeile, *The book of Exodus*, pp. lix foll.

been adduced which it is needless to consider in detail[1]. The facts as they stand are perplexing, and justify a suspension of judgment. It is reasonable to suppose that the decalogue in its present form bears traces of expansion in prophetic times; at the same time it lays down principles of morality which are so elementary as to be strictly consistent with what we know of the condition of Israel in Mosaic times. It is difficult to see what other precepts could have been better adapted to lift the Hebrews above the degraded nature-religion of their heathen neighbours, to teach them the true character of their divine Deliverer, and to educate them in the rudiments of social justice and humanity. In short, the 'ten words' as we have them in the Pentateuch[2] may be a later prophetic summary of the great moral *ideas* contained in the religion of Moses; but there is every reason to suppose that in a brief and easily remembered form the primary moral precepts of the decalogue constituted *from the first* the foundation of Israel's national development. It is indeed impossible otherwise to account for the vitality and vigour which gave to the Hebrews their physical and moral superiority over the inhabitants of Canaan. The decalogue has in fact intrinsic credibility as a Mosaic utterance[3], and we may reasonably accept it as an authentic monument—at least in its main substance—of the period to which Hebrew tradition assigns it[4].

Forms of worship.

Some forms of worship were doubtless observed in the wilderness, though it is impossible to point to any details of *cultus* prescribed by Moses himself. Some traditional usages seem to have been retained or regulated by the lawgiver. There certainly existed a

[1] See Smend, p. 47. [2] Exod. xx.; Deut. v.

[3] A. B. Bruce, *Christian Apologetics*, p. 209. Cp. Kautzsch in *DB*, v. 634. He points out that the decalogue in its primary form is more concerned with *rights* than with moral duties.

[4] On this subject see more in the *Short History of the Hebrews*, pp. 294 foll. The *explanations* given of some of the commandments (*e.g.* the second and fourth) seem certainly to be later prophetic additions.

primitive sanctuary, or 'tent of meeting,' designed to serve as the seat of the sacred oracle and as a shelter for the ark. In form this structure would resemble the ordinary shepherd's tent, having its outer and inner compartment and standing in an enclosed court. The 'tent of meeting' seems in Mosaic times to have been pitched *outside* the camp (Exod. xxxiii. 7; Num. xi. 26, xii. 4), and not, as was assumed in post-exilic times, at its centre. Sacrifices of some kind must have been offered during the wanderings, but we can only conjecture what their exact significance may have been. According to the primitive Semitic idea, sacrifice was the means of renewing or maintaining the bond which united the people to their god; and a ceremony like that described in connection with the ratification of the covenant (Exod. xxiv.) would probably be repeated on special occasions, *e.g.* before the tribes engaged in battle with their enemies[1]. If Moses instituted a regular priesthood, possibly recruited from members of his own tribe (Levi)[2], it is unlikely that its main function was that of sacrifice. The 'holy' persons of Semitic antiquity were attached to the sanctuary and were its recognised guardians, but they were chiefly employed in consulting the oracle touching matters of difficulty. To the priesthood would naturally fall the task of continuing the work of Moses, *i.e.* imparting *torah* to those who asked for guidance, and giving judicial sentences (*toroth*) in matters of dispute[3]. Thus a traditional and authoritative *torah* would gradually be formed, and there would be a tendency for the priesthood to become hereditary in certain families. The means by which

[1] In Deut. xx. 1 foll. an exhortation by the priest is mentioned as a preliminary to battle.

[2] Moses himself exercised priestly functions, of which the most important was the giving of *torah* (Exod. xviii. 15 foll.). He is in fact the prototype both of priesthood and prophecy.

[3] The Arabs in the same way brought their hard matters to Mohammed and 'his decisions became the law of Islam, as those of Moses were the foundation of the Hebrew *torah*' (Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 70).

Jahveh's will was ascertained was usually the casting of the sacred lot, and it is easy to understand how rapidly the priesthood would acquire a powerful influence over the mass of the people. The original *torah* given by Moses, and after his time by the priesthood, was oral[1]; and the name '*En-mishpat* ('well of judgment') at Kadesh, which was for a long period the religious centre of the tribes, indicates that the sanctuary was invariably the seat of justice, as well as the place of worship.

The work of Moses.

We can only arrive at a just conception of the part played by Moses in the development of Israel's religion if we think of him not chiefly as lawgiver but as *prophet*. According to tradition, indeed, he had at one time been an expert in the magic for which the Egyptians were famous. But as time went on he was recognised in his true greatness as a 'man of God'—an inspired organ of the Divine purpose, a leader raised up and enabled by the Spirit of Jahveh. The tendency of later ages was to ascribe to him the whole mass of institutions and ordinances which were framed to meet the needs of successive generations[2]. Doubtless Moses laid a foundation of usage, both in civil and criminal transactions, upon which others built[3]. But we now know that legislation was only a subordinate element in his work. He is rather to be considered as the foremost figure in the line of inspired teachers or prophets through whom Almighty God revealed to Israel His character, purpose, and requirement[4]. And although it is not possible to point to any special details of the *cultus* which can be certainly ascribed to Moses, there is no doubt that in two important points he laid the foundations of Israel's religious development.

[1] This is implied in Exod. xviii. 16 foll. The giving of *torah* was also connected with the sanctuary (Exod. xxxiii. 7 foll.).

[2] These, as Dr Bruce observes (*Apologetics*, p. 221), were 'ascribed to Moses not so much as author, but rather as authority.'

[3] This may be inferred from the narrative of Exod. xviii. 13 foll.

[4] Hos. xii. 13. Cp. Deut. xxxiv. 10; Jer. xv. 1.

1. In the first place he grasped for himself, and taught his fellow-tribesmen, the true significance of the events connected with the departure of the tribes from Egypt. He understood the bearing of these events on the character of Jahveh: His 'holiness' or separateness from nature, His power, His willingness to redeem. In the great deliverance was involved a revelation, which was necessarily the starting-point of a higher religion. Accordingly the central principle of his system was devotion to Jahveh as a gracious Being who had mercifully intervened to deliver an enslaved people from bondage[1]; who had manifested His lordship over nature and His superiority to the deities of the heathen[2]; who had adopted Israel and brought it into a filial relation to Himself[3]. The loosely organised tribes were in fact welded into a nation by their common relationship to their Deliverer; and it has been justly remarked that this adhesion of a group of tribes to a single deity marked a step in advance from mere 'henotheism' or 'monolatry' towards monotheism. But it is even more important to notice that in the Mosaic conception of Jahveh lay 'the promise and potency' not of mere monotheism, but of the ethical monotheism of the great prophets of the eighth century[4]. For Jahveh revealed Himself in the events of the exodus as the God not of a particular territory, but of a people. Throughout the wanderings He *walked with them in a tent and in a tabernacle.* He led them onwards through the toils of their pilgrimage and brought them into the land of promise. He manifested in deeds His hatred of oppression and injustice, His longsuffering, His compassion, His readiness to forgive, His sustaining power and grace. Thus by kindling and keeping alive Israel's faith in its deliverer, Moses gave the tribes a rallying-point and a bond of union which could never be altogether lost from view.

[1] Exod. iii. 8. [2] Exod. viii. 10, ix. 14, 16, x. 2, xv. 11.

[3] Exod. iv. 22; Hos. xi. 1.

[4] Cp. Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 46. Kautzsch says, 'We are quite entitled to claim—not ethical monotheism in the strict sense of the term but—*ethical henotheism* for the time of Moses' (*DB*, v. 632).

2. In the second place Moses taught the supreme importance in religion of righteous conduct. The deliverance from Egypt formed the basis of a covenant between Jahveh and the ransomed people[1]. The Hebrews became servants of Jahveh, purchased by redemption, and henceforth bound to His service[2]. At the very outset they were subjected to an elementary moral code, and were reminded that a special character was the condition of covenant-fellowship with Jahveh. The moral law was seen to be the supreme tie between God and man; the foundation was securely laid upon which future legislation could be built up, and the great ethical principles were enunciated which the prophets afterwards developed. In this ethical basis of Mosaism lies its claim to be an important factor in the development of an universal religion[3]. 'What was of permanent significance [in Mosaism] was the paramount place of the Moral Law....By placing the ten commandments on its forefront it made good its claim to be an everlasting covenant; it taught and laid down the moral conditions of religious character, not only for its own time, but for all time. It was a step in religious history of which we can even now but imperfectly measure the greatness[4].'

[1] The conception of Jahveh's relationship to Israel as a *covenant* is thought to have arisen later than the exodus, perhaps not earlier than the prophetic period (see Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, pp. 417 foll.). But see on the other side Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 301 note; Robertson, *Early Religion of Israel*, note, xxii. etc. The discussion in Smend, pp. 116 foll., is valuable.

[2] Lev. xxv. 42; cp. Ezek. xvi. 8.

[3] Cp. Deut. xxix. 14, 15.

[4] R. W. Church, *The Discipline of the Christian Character*, p. 34. It should be also borne in mind that the Mosaic *torah* had this peculiarity, that it was concerned largely with questions of right and wrong, and thus educated the moral sense of the Hebrews. The supreme value of the Mosaic *torah*, recognised by the prophets, was that it bore witness to the righteousness of Jahveh, and that it taught Israel *the good and the right way*. Cp. Smend, p. 77. 'In erster Linie wurde das Recht, das die Thora lehrte, als der Inhalt seines Willens empfunden. Das zu kennen war die Gotteserkenntniss, die Israel zumeist interessirte (Hos. iv. 6).'

CHAPTER III.

FROM MOSES TO SAMUEL.

THE state of things to be described in the present chapter virtually lasted until the fall of the Hebrew monarchy, for the prophets of the eighth century exercised comparatively little influence on the long-established popular religion of their contemporaries. At the same time their polemical utterances throw valuable light on the condition of religion in Israel.

Results of the conquest.

The conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews and their settlement in the land was, it is needless to say, a fact of crucial importance in the development of their religion, which was profoundly modified both by the transition from nomadic to agricultural life, and also by contact with the culture and civilisation of the Canaanites. The religion of Canaan in fact penetrated so deeply into that of Israel that the later prophets regard the popular worship of their day as practically Canaanitish.

First, however, a word is necessary in regard to the historical conditions and results of the conquest. Speaking broadly, the Hebrews were only able to establish themselves securely in the hill-country of central Palestine. Two tribes, Reuben and Gad, settled in the district east of Jordan. The first advance westwards, that of Simeon and Judah, ended in the virtual annihilation of Simeon and the establishment of Judah in the highlands lying to the west of the Dead Sea.

The second movement, carried out by the tribe of Joseph under the leadership of Joshua, was more successful, and led to the establishment of Shiloh in the hill-country of Ephraim as the chief tribal sanctuary and religious centre. Meanwhile the Canaanites remained in possession of the villages and of many important towns in the lowland districts; and though the religion of Jahveh proved strong enough to hold the Hebrews together during the actual process of invasion, its influence was afterwards neutralised to a great extent, partly by the mutual jealousies of the tribes, partly by the physical conformation of the land, which rendered tribal cooperation extremely difficult[1]. Again, the policy of Israel in regard to the Canaanites was not one of extermination, nor even of isolation, which was the ideal of later reformers. Some of the tribes (*e.g.* Judah) coalesced to a great extent with their heathen neighbours[2], while the bulk of the Canaanitish population was not actually subjugated till the reign of Solomon[3]. Thus the two races became inextricably intermingled, and the process of amalgamation was hastened by the facts that both used nearly the same language, that they freely intermarried, and that the Hebrews were obliged to learn the rudiments of agriculture from their new neighbours. Finally, the spirit of religious exclusiveness, so familiar a feature of later Judaism, was entirely absent[4]. Accordingly the intermingling of the Israelites with the inhabitants of the conquered territory tended, as is usually the case in Semitic countries, to religious fusion[5] (syncretism). The worship of Jahveh and the cultus of the Canaanitish nature-deities (*ba'alim*) at first existed side by side; but when the Hebrews possessed themselves of the traditional sanctuaries (*bâmoth*) of the land, they

[1] Cp. *Hist. of the Hebrews*, p. 102.

[2] Judah was from the earliest times a composite tribe. See the art. 'Judah' in Hastings' *DB.*

[3] 1 Kings ix. 20, 21.

[4] Smend, p. 131.

[5] Cp. Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 39.

soon learned to identify their national deity with the local *ba'al*, and transferred to the worship of Jahveh the ritual and accessories of the heathen shrines[1]. It is easy to see how this state of things came about. The Hebrews looked upon *ba'al* as the owner of the land, and upon the fruits of the soil—corn, wine, and oil—as his gifts. Naturally therefore having obtained possession of *ba'al's* territory they felt impelled to seek his favour, for though Jahveh was in a sense present with His people (a fact of which the sacred ark was the pledge), yet Sinai was still regarded as His fixed abode[2]. According to the prevalent Semitic belief, in entering Palestine they had entered the domain of the god of the land and owed him homage as its king[3]. More spiritual ideas could only be slowly developed.

The Hebrews still clung to their ancestral faith in Jahveh, and gradually transferred the attributes of the *ba'al* to Him as the real owner of the land into which He had brought the tribes. The idea slowly tended to prevail that He had taken up His abode in Canaan[4] and that He was the author of its fertility, the giver of rain and fruitful seasons; and it is obvious that such a conception gained strength in proportion as the Hebrews became habituated to agricultural pursuits. Thus Hebrew religion at this period became 'syncretistic.' In other words an identification of Jahveh with the *ba'alim* naturally resulted from the social fusion of the two nationalities[5].

[1] There was also a tendency for the foul and impure rites connected with *ba'al*-worship to find their way into the cultus of Jahveh.

[2] This is implied in Deborah's Song (Judg. v. 4). Jahveh comes from the south to aid His oppressed people in their conflict with Sisera. Cp. pp. 32, 33.

[3] Cp. the similar case in 2 Kings xvii. 25 foll.

[4] We cannot trace the growth of the idea that Jahveh not only manifested His presence at various localities (Ex. xx. 24) but had His dwelling-place in heaven. This idea, however, is present in J and E (*c.* 850—750 B.C.). See (*e.g.*) Gen. xxi. 17, xxii. 11 (E), xxviii. 12, 17 (E); Exod. xix. 11, 20 (J).

[5] The identification of Jahveh with *ba'al* is implied in the names

The Hebrews appropriated the Canaanitish sanctuaries with their characteristic adjuncts, the pillars, the altars, the sacred poles.

Thus in every part of the land there existed some shrine at which Jahveh could be approached, and worshipped as the true *ba'al*, 'lord,' of the new territory[1]. In every specially fruitful spot He was supposed to manifest Himself as the fountain of life; and the worship at Canaanitish shrines was justified by the rise of a tradition, or by some dim reminiscence, that at these sacred spots Jahveh had formerly revealed Himself to the forefathers of the Hebrew nation. Of these localities some naturally acquired special prestige and became favourite places of pilgrimage, *e.g.* Bethel, Dan, Gilgal, and Beersheba.

Effects on religion.

There was thus evidently some risk of the religion of Jahveh degenerating into a mere nature-cult, polluted by the same coarse and foul rites which had so deeply corrupted the worship of the Canaanites. But there is another side to the picture. It is obvious that without the change from a nomadic state to the settled life of an agricultural community the Hebrews could not have advanced to any higher stage in culture nor have made any real religious progress.

The life of agriculture, especially in such a country as Palestine, seems to demand a specially close and continuous dependence on the gifts of God, and an habitual realisation

occurring in the families of Saul and David, Esh-baal, Meribaal, Beeliada. In the books of Samuel these names are altered in accordance with the stricter ideas of a later age to Ish-bosheth, Mephibosheth, Eliada (2 Sam. v. 16; cp. 1 Chr. xiv. 7). 'Jerubbaal' (Judg. vi. 32) has been explained as meaning 'Ba'al (*i.e.* Jahveh) strives' (Smend), or 'He who contends for Ba'al,' *i.e.* Jahveh (Kautzsch). That Jahveh was also addressed as *melekh*, 'king,' appears from such a name as Melchi-shua (1 Sam. xiv. 49).

[1] Thus David regards his expulsion from his native soil as tantamount to a command to *serve other gods* (1 Sam. xxvi. 19). If an altar is erected to Jahveh outside Canaan, it must be built of soil taken from His land (2 Kings v. 17). Cp. the phrase 'Jahveh's land' (Hos. ix. 3; Jer. ii. 7).

of His presence and power[1]. The supremacy of Jahveh was safeguarded by the circumstances in which the Hebrew settlers were placed. Their hold on the new territory was partial and precarious; they were still frequently engaged in warfare, and they naturally looked to Jahveh, their Divine champion and protector, for leadership and help. They were persuaded that He was still willing to fight on their behalf[2], if they suffered defeat, the cause was not the superiority of the foe but the displeasure of Jahveh. The ark in the camp was the pledge of His presence in the midst of the armies of Israel.

There were also other influences tending to keep alive the traditional Mosaic conception of Jahveh. The 'Song of Deborah' (Judg. v.) illustrates the extent to which the spirit of patriotism was fostered, or could be rekindled, by religion. Deborah's appearance in Jahveh's name is the signal for the willing self-oblation of the people[3]. The rise of *Naziritism*, again, is a noteworthy feature of this epoch. Nazirites (such as Samson) were men self-consecrated to Jahveh, who in token of their vow wore their hair unshorn. They were, like the prophets[4], devoted to the special service of Jahveh. Their abstinence from wine was a tacit protest against the worship of *ba'al* (wine being the richest product of the land), and implied a reaction from the culture of Canaan to the simple and austere habits of nomadic life[5]. Probably the earliest 'prophets' (*nebîim*) cherished similar ideals. They traversed the land endeavouring to kindle the zeal of their fellow-

[1] Cp. Smend, p. 49.

[2] Josh. x. 10; Judg. iv. 15, v. 23; 2 Sam. v. 24.

[3] Judg. v. 9, 23.

[4] With whom they are coupled by Amos ii. 12. The name *Nazirite* probably = 'consecrated one.' See Smend, pp. 152, 153; also Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 657. Naziritism as an organised legal institution is described in Num. vi. Apparently women as well as men might be Nazirites (vi. 2), and the vow might be temporary, not perpetual as in Samson's case.

[5] The same feature appears in the Rechabites (Jer. xxxv. 7).

tribesmen on behalf of Jahveh and the land which was now His by right of conquest. Doubtless too the priests attached to the ark were zealous representatives of Israel's ancestral faith, and withstood the tendency to assimilate the worship of Jahveh to the cult of *ba'al*. Finally, the so-called 'judges[1]' were at any rate in intention champions of Israel's religion as well as of its liberties. They were regarded as something more than mere tribal chiefs who in times of oppression rallied the tribes, inspired them with enthusiasm and led them into battle against their enemies. They were looked upon as deliverers raised up by Jahveh and endued with His Spirit in order to lift once more the standard of that faith which the Hebrews had inherited from Moses. They were in fact human representatives of Jahveh, through whom He deigned to bring succour and deliverance to His people when distressed by their enemies, and it is hardly a matter of wonder that in time of peace some at least of the judges should have been allowed to exercise kingly powers. Thus Gideon's informal sway extended over a considerable portion of mid-Palestine, and he even seems to have transmitted his authority to his sons[2]. But Gideon apparently had no thought of a kingship in Israel other than that of Jahveh Himself, though it might be delegated to a human representative. By setting up a costly *'ephod*, or image of Jahveh, in his own city of Ophra, he evidently desired to signalise the place as a centre of Jahveh-worship and to enhance his own prestige as a ruler appointed by Jahveh Himself[3].

Such were the general conditions of religion during the period which followed the settlement in Canaan. As regards

[1] 'Judge' (שופט) was a name applied to the king (*e.g.* Isai. xvi. 5; Am. ii. 3; Hos. vii. 7) in virtue of his principal functions. The word שפט is apparently only found in the (later) *framework* of the book of Judges, but 'judge' may well have been a contemporary title of the heroes described in the book. See Smend, p. 64.

[2] Judg. viii. 22 foll. [3] Smend, p. 54.

Israel's moral and social life, the period was undoubtedly one of contradictions[1], or rather, as we may gather from certain passages in the book of Judges[2], it was one of rude beginnings. Deeds of furious violence, insecurity of life and property, sexual crimes, blood-feuds, merciless barbarity in war—these were characteristic incidents of the time. On the other hand the book of Ruth, despite its apparently late date, may be accepted as giving a pleasing picture of other aspects of social life among the Hebrews at a time when they were beginning to be an agricultural people. If there was much rude violence, there was also a readiness to resent deeds of cruelty[3]; if there was a tendency to imitate the gross habits of the heathen Canaanites, there was also a jealous adherence to the traditional usages of Israel[4]. Marriage was held in honour and primitive virtues were practised—charitableness, open-handed hospitality, neighbourly kindness and good faith. There is in fact good reason to believe that during this age of disorder and religious disintegration, the moral precepts as well as the religious traditions of the Mosaic age were cherished by an inner circle of faithful Israelites[5].

Moral and social conditions.

Having thus sketched the main features of the 'pre-prophetic' period in Israel's religious history, we may dwell upon some particular points in more detail.

The maintenance of Israel's traditional religion depended for the most part on the work of two classes: the priests and the prophets. Apparently the chief centre of priestly influence was Shiloh, though small companies of priests were probably dispersed throughout the country. There would seem to have been no numerous class of priests in old Israel. We hear of only a single priest

Priests and prophets.

[1] So Schultz describes it, *O. T. Theology*, vol. I. p. 150.
[2] *e.g.* chh. xvii.—xix.
[3] Judg. xix., xx.
[4] 2 Sam. xiii. 12.
[5] See Smend, § 10 (pp. 140—151).

in the book of Judges (ch. xvii.)[1]; Eli and his sons are mentioned as attached to the sacred ark at Shiloh[2]. The first three kings were in the habit of consulting a particular priest[3]. The fact is that sacrifice was not as yet a common or frequent observance, and the offerer in most cases was the head of a family or an official person, for instance the king. The real function of the priest was still that of acting as guardian to a shrine, consulting the sacred image where one existed, and giving *torah* to such as desired it. Priests were evidently held in high honour as depositaries of *torah*. They had a prescriptive right to consult the sacred oracle, to declare Jahveh's will in difficult emergencies, and to give His sentence in matters of right and wrong[4]. As regards these functions the priest did not materially differ from the 'seer,' except in being as a rule attached to a particular sanctuary, and in being qualified to consult the oracle[5].

Indeed, the share of the ancient 'seer' (*ro'eh*) in upholding the traditional religion of Jahveh is very vague and uncertain. Samuel is an example of one who was both priest and seer, and it is clear that in primitive times the functions of priest and prophet were almost identical. The office of 'seer' was probably a survival from ancient pre-Mosaic religion. Divination in divers forms was a standing feature of Semitic heathenism, and Canaanitish 'prophecy' was scarcely more than divination[6]. The 'seer,' like an ordinary

[1] The Levite whom Micah appointed his priest (Judg. xvii. 10) was a lineal descendant of Moses (xviii. 30). It may be inferred that the priesthood in pre-prophetic times traced its origin and descent to Moses.

[2] 1 Sam. i. 3.

[3] Thus Saul consulted Ahijah (1 Sam. xiv. 3, 18), David Abiathar, and afterwards Zadok and Ira (1 Sam. xxii. 20; 2 Sam. xv. 24 f., xx. 26).

[4] Cp. Deut. xxxiii. 9, 10. How the priesthood became connected with the tribe of Levi is a matter of great obscurity. See Baudissin in *DB*, IV., *s.v.* 'Priests and Levites.'

[5] See Robertson Smith, *O. T. in Jewish Church*, p. 292.

[6] *Ibid.* p. 287. On different modes of consulting the oracle see Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 663.

soothsayer, was usually consulted in reference to common incidents of every-day life, but the functions of the seer, whatever they may have been, were quickly merged in those of the priesthood, and the very name was apparently disused at an early date[1].

Worship in the age of the judges.

The type of worship which prevailed during the pre-prophetic period gives us perhaps the clearest idea of the conception which the ancient Israelite formed of Jahveh. Its character was remarkably simple. In its essential elements, the worship was identical with that which had, according to ancient Semitic usage, been customary in Canaan before the arrival of the Hebrews. The land was already rich in 'high places' (*bâmoth*). Almost every town had its sanctuary crowning a neighbouring hill-top. At these 'holy places' there usually existed a primitive altar of earth or of unhewn stones[2] on which gifts were presented to the deity, whose presence was symbolised sometimes by a tree or group of trees, more frequently by an *'ashêrah* or a *maṣṣébah*, in some cases by both emblems. Occasionally images of wood or stone (*pesîlîm*) were employed in worship; in process of time these became more elaborate. The primitive image was replaced either by an *'ephod*, which was apparently a wooden figure covered with plates of precious metal[3], or by a molten image (*massekah*). The form of these images in pre-prophetic times is uncertain, but most probably the type which tended to prevail in ancient Israel was the figure of an ox[4]. In some

[1] 1 Samuel ix. 9.

[2] Exod. xx. 24, 25. An altar of hewn stones was probably first erected by Solomon. The touch of an iron implement was for a long time regarded as profaning the altar.

[3] See Smend, p. 41. The word appears to mean 'something thrown over.' It perhaps meant originally the garment with which the image was clothed, and so (by extension) the image itself.

[4] The practice of worshipping Jahveh under the form of an ox or bull was probably derived from the Canaanites. Num. xxiii. 22, xxiv. 8 seem

shrines *teraphim* (probably of human form) were placed beside the *'ephod*[1].

Worship was as a rule the concern of a clan or community, and the offering of sacrifice at a local sanctuary was an occasion of public festivity. The head of a family, or the chief personage in a particular district, usually took the lead in the ceremony. The flesh of the victim furnished provision for a social meal. Sacrifice was not regarded as in any sense an act of propitiation, but rather as a means of renewing the bond of fellowship which united Jahveh to His worshippers. The ritual of the sacrifice was simple enough. The victim was slain, and the blood, as the portion assigned to the deity, was smeared on the altar or poured out at its foot. The whole of the flesh was consumed by the assembled worshippers, with accessories such as bread and wine—the occasion being one of merriment and hilarity. The whole act of worship was in fact essentially social[2], and portions were distributed freely among those present, whether rich or poor[3]. The existence of some sort of hall or building for the holding of the sacrificial feast seems to be implied in 1 Sam. ix. 22, but buildings for worship were only necessary where there were images. The ark of Jahveh seems to have been sheltered since the time of Moses by a tent, and it was to a tent erected on the hill

to suggest that the idea associated with that of the ox was that of creative power or victorious strength. Cp. Robertson, *Early Religion of Israel*, p. 220. Possibly the cult of the brazen serpent was carried on in Judah during this period.

[1] See Judg. xvii. 5; Hos. iii. 4. Possibly the word *teraphim* denotes only a *single* image in some passages, *e.g.* 1 Sam. xix. 13. The kissing of the idols by the worshippers is mentioned in 1 Kings xix. 18 and Hos. xiii. 2.

[2] If private persons wished to pay their own 'vows' or 'free-will-' or 'thank-offerings' they would reserve their offerings for some one of the recognised religious feasts, at which their duty might be most conveniently discharged. Cp. 1 Sam. i. 3, 21.

[3] See among other passages 1 Sam. ix. 12 foll., x. 3, xx. 6; 2 Sam. vi. 19; Amos iv. 5. Cp. Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, pp. 236 foll.

of Zion that David transferred it (2 Sam. vii. 6; vi. 17). The worship thus briefly described, apart from its later accessories, was really a permanent relic of Israel's nomadic life, for slain sacrifice (*zebach*) followed by the consumption of the victim at a social meal was in fact the most primitive kind of offering[1].

A later kind of oblation, which no doubt became customary when the Hebrews had exchanged the nomadic for the agricultural life[2], was the *minḥah* or 'cereal offering.' This was looked upon as a sacred tribute paid to the Deity and taken from the fruits of the soil of which He was the giver. These two kinds of oblation—the slain sacrifice and the *minḥah*—made up the sum of ordinary religious observances among the Israelites, though the whole burnt-offering was not entirely unknown[3]. The difference between them was that in the case of the *zebach* the greater portion of the victim's flesh was consumed by the worshippers, whereas the *minḥah* was wholly made over to the Deity and became the perquisite of the priests attached to the sanctuary[4]. The *minḥah* was ordinarily accompanied by a drink-offering (*nesek*) of wine or oil.

There were few fixed *times* of sacrifice in ancient Israel, and these seem to have had originally no special relation to the worship of Jahveh. The arrival of a guest was a usual occasion for a sacrifice followed by a feast[5]. The *new moon* was generally observed, for instance by the family

[1] The consumption of the victim either whole or in part by *fire* belongs to a time when spiritual ideas were somewhat more developed. On the one hand the flesh of the victim came to be regarded as too holy for human consumption; on the other, the use of fire was looked upon as a convenient mode of conveying to the deity, in an etherialised form, his share of the sacrificial food. Cp. Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 218.

[2] Cp. Exod. xxii. 29, xxiii. 19, xxxiv. 26.

[3] See, for instance, Judg. vi. 18 foll., xiii. 19 foll.; 1 Sam. xiii. 9 foll.

[4] Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, pp. 221 foll. Cp. 2 Kings xxiii. 9.

[5] See Judg. vi. 18.

of Jesse at Bethlehem[1]. The three agricultural feasts or 'pilgrimages,' which were traditional in Canaan and connected with different stages of the harvest, were obvious occasions of sacrifice: the feast of *Maṣṣoth*, when the first-fruits were gathered[2], the *feast of weeks*, marking the completion of the wheat harvest, and the *feast of ingathering* when the remaining produce of the soil was brought in[3]. To these may be added the occasion of *sheep-shearing*[4]. The *Sabbath* was evidently regarded in pre-prophetic times as a day of cessation from labour, and probably of special worship, and the injunction to observe it is based on reasons of humanity[5].

Summary.

We are now able to form a general idea of the religious condition of Israel before the eighth century. Worship was of a naïve and simple type and was commonly regarded as the bond which united the community to Jahveh. There were elements in it, moreover, which to a great extent counteracted the tendency towards a debased nature-worship. The 'holy places' of the Israelites as a rule had their priests, whose duty it was through the teaching of *torah* to keep alive in Israel *the light of Jahveh* (Isai. ii. 5).

Of religious life, properly speaking, there was little. The habitual mood of the people was one of cheerful confidence in the favour of their national Deity. The Hebrews were on the whole a vigorous, prosperous, and liberty-loving people, and

[1] 1 Sam. xx. 5 foll. Cp. Isai. i. 13. The passage in 1 Sam. xx. shows that though the tribes had long been united in the worship of Jahveh yet the clans still maintained their annual *sacra gentilitia* at which all the clansmen were bound to be present. Cp. Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 258.

[2] With the feast of Maṣṣoth ('unleavened cakes') the Passover was apparently combined (Deut. xiv. 23, xvi. 1). The Passover seems originally to have been the occasion when the firstlings of the flocks and herds were presented at the sanctuary. Cp. Exod. xxxiv. 19.

[3] Exod. xxiii. 16; Judg. ix. 27, xxi. 19. [4] 1 Sam. xxv. 11.

[5] Exod. xxiii. 12, xxxiv. 21. Cp. 2 Kings iv. 23; Hos. ii. 11; Amos viii. 5.

the sanguine tone of their national life was reflected in their worship. Accordingly we find no trace of special offerings of propitiation at this period[1]. We read of money-payments in satisfaction for transgressions—payments with which a man 'covered' his sin, and which were duly made to the priests who acted as judges[2]. But the development of piacular sacrifice was apparently the outcome of a later (the seventh) century, when the pressure of disaster and social distress led to a certain change of attitude towards Jahveh—the old joyous confidence yielding to an abiding sense of the divine displeasure. In the pre-prophetic period when *things went well* the Hebrews had no strong sense of shortcoming. They felt that on the whole Jahveh was well disposed towards them and that He might be trusted to take their part in time of need[3]. Hence it was that in days of distress the popular expectation was directed towards a *day of Jahveh*—a day when He would signally manifest His favour to His people in the discomfiture of their enemies. Indeed we gather from the writings of Amos that this popular belief had by his time degenerated into a crass and delusive fatalism[4].

It was, however, 'a national not a personal providence that was taught by ancient religion[5].' Individual men in their hours of perplexity or distress found little comfort in the essentially

[1] It was part of the imperfection incidental to the early conception of Jahveh that His wrath was regarded as more or less capricious and unaccountable. In time of distress, when Jahveh seemed to withhold His aid, Israel was fain to wait patiently till its cry reached the ears of Jahveh and moved Him to pity. There was very little sense of personal or national sinfulness. At the same time the sacrificial feast served for atonement in so far as it removed all possible causes of estrangement between God and the worshippers. Cp. 1 Sam. iii. 14, xxvi. 19; and see Smend, p. 127.

[2] Cp. Exod. xxi. 30; 1 Sam. vi. 3; 2 Kings xii. 16; Amos ii 8; Hos. iv. 8.

[3] Such passages as Num. xxiii. 24, Deut. xxxiii. 29 perhaps reflect this mood. They are evidently the outcome of a consciousness of prosperity and of recent success in war.

[4] Amos v. 18 foll.

[5] *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 246.

social worship of their fellows. They were tempted to seek the aid of wizards or soothsayers, and to rely on magical ceremonies. Certain usages, such as consulting the dead and offering them sacrifices, seem to have survived to a late period[1]. In Deut. xviii. 10 foll. we have a list of the different agencies from which men might be tempted to seek counsel or succour. But the spirit of the Mosaic religion always tended to exclude these heathenish arts, as inconsistent with faith in the wise and merciful providence of Israel's God[2].

[1] Cp. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3 foll., and see Schultz, *O. T. Theology*, pp. 253, 254; Smend, p. 112 note.

[2] The sense of a 'particular providence' is, however, strikingly present in some of the narratives of Genesis, especially perhaps in those of E. See, for instance, Gen. xxi. 17—20, xxxi. 5—9, xxxii. 1, xxxv. 3, xlv. 5—8, xlviii. 15, 16. In this connection we should perhaps notice the belief in angels and angelic ministry which is a feature of the Hexateuchal narratives J and E.

CHAPTER IV.

SAMUEL AND HIS WORK.

THE type of religion described in the last chapter was that which the prophets of the eighth century found firmly established among their countrymen. But for a long period influences had been at work which tended to modify and expand the popular conception of Jahveh and His requirement. As often happens in the history of religion, the efforts of a single individual gave a new impulse and direction to the religious tendencies of the time. In the book of Jeremiah Samuel is classed with Moses as one of Jahveh's most zealous and devoted servants[1]. It was to him that Israel practically owed two of its characteristic institutions—prophetism and the monarchy.

Samuel and prophetism.

Samuel was in all probability himself a Nazirite[2], and he grew to manhood at the central sanctuary of Shiloh. It has been already pointed out that Naziritism was the outcome of a certain reaction against the worship and customs of Canaan. The Nazirites were regarded by the prophets as a class of men specially raised up by Jahveh to keep alive in Israel the true knowledge of His will[3]. In the case of Samson, the Nazirite vow was combined with active service in arms against the Philistine

[1] Jerem. xv. 1; cp. Ps. xcix. 6.

[2] See 1 Sam. i. 11.

[3] Amos ii. 11.

oppressors of Israel. Samuel exercised a deeper and more permanent, because a more spiritual, influence on his countrymen. As a Nazirite he was a not less ardent patriot than Samson, nor less hostile to foreign domination and alien customs. But as a 'prophet' he held a foremost place among those whose work was more distinctively religious. According to the earliest account Samuel was a 'seer' (*ro'eh*), and we find Saul and his servant consulting him in a private difficulty[1]. But tradition ascribed to him also the position of a prophet (*nâbhi*) in its later sense[2]; and he seems to have discerned the importance of organising the irregular prophetism which the Hebrews shared with the inhabitants of Canaan, and of which we first hear in connection with the foundation of the monarchy. Prophetism in fact originally stood in close relation to that national struggle for freedom which was the immediate cause of Saul's elevation to the kingship. The undisciplined troops of *nebîim* of whom we catch glimpses in the books of Samuel and Kings[3] were ecstatic devotees, who were excited by the pressure of Philistine domination to frenzied enthusiasm on behalf of Jahveh's land and religion[4]. They traversed the country in order to kindle everywhere the flame of patriotism

[1] 1 Sam. ix. 6 foll. As to the distinction between *ro'eh* or *chozeh* (2 Sam. xxiv. 11, etc.) and *nâbhi* perhaps Piepenbring's account is the simplest and most satisfactory. 'Les anciens *voyants* d'Israël, d'abord de simples devins, furent transformés en *prophètes* sous l'influence du Jahvisme, et devinrent avant tout les defenseurs de celui-ci' (*Histoire du peuple d'Israël*, p. 119). Cp. Smend, p. 82: 'The gift of the seer became more and more devoted to the service of the national cause.'

[2] 1 Sam. iii. 20, iv. 1.

[3] 1 Sam. x. 5, xix. 20 foll. Cp. 1 Kings xviii.

[4] The word *nâbhi* is probably of Canaanitish origin and has an *active* sense, meaning either (1) 'one who bubbles forth,' 'throws forth ecstatic cries' (assuming that נבא=נבע), or simply (2) 'one who speaks' with the added connotation 'on behalf of another.' See Davidson, *O. T. Prophecy*, VII.; Marti, *Geschichte*, § 31; Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, lect. ii. note 18, etc.

and the spirit of willing self-devotion for the cause of Jahveh[1]. Samuel seems to have discerned in these companies of enthusiasts the 'promise and potency' of a powerful religious force; he saw that the movement only needed guidance to become an element serviceable to the advance of religion. This appears to be the significance of the tradition that Samuel formed the *nebîim* into orderly communities, in which the prophetic gift could be cultivated and the flame of devotion cherished. At any rate from this time onwards until the close of Elijah's ministry *the sons of the prophets* held a recognised place of honour and influence in the religious life of the nation[2]. They lived in the neighbourhood of the chief sanctuaries in central Palestine (Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho) and were probably closely associated with the priests; and we may fairly suppose that the prophetic *naioth* formed a rallying-point for the newly-kindled zeal of the nation. It is probable enough that among the *nebîim* the art of sacred song was studied, and that to them may be traced the beginnings of a national literature. Both Saul and David at different times had relationships with them, and it is reasonable to suppose that they kept records of contemporary events, so perhaps laying the foundations of the historical books of the Old Testament[3]. These however are matters of conjecture. What is certain is that in Elijah's time

[1] Kautzsch remarks that 'as in the Middle Ages the ravages of the plague gave rise to troops of flagellants, so, in the period of which we are speaking, subjection to a people hated and esteemed unclean produced a condition of great excitement,' etc. (*DB*, v. 652). The use of music to stimulate the *nebîim* to greater frenzy is implied in 1 Sam. x. 5 and 2 Kings iii. 15.

[2] Amos vii. 12 seems to imply a distinction between individual prophets living in solitude, and '*sons of the prophets*,' *i.e.* members of the prophetic order or guild. In 1 Sam. xix. 19 'Naioth'=*dwellings*, or a *college* of prophets. We read of such groups of *nebîim* as settled at Bethel and Jericho (2 Kings ii. 3 foll.), and at Gilgal (iv. 38). Cp. Robertson Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, p. 85.

[3] Cp. 1 Chron. xxix. 29.

the *sons of the prophets* were a recognised order, among whom occasionally appeared individuals who played a prominent part in the national history, who 'rose above their order and even placed themselves in opposition to it[1].'

The nebîim.

The later development of prophetism will engage our attention in another chapter. Meanwhile it is important to notice the real character of the service which early prophetism rendered to religion. The *nebîim* of Samuel's day were not an exalted order even in the eyes of the common people[2], and when Elijah's influence was withdrawn, they rapidly sank into dishonour. In its lower forms prophetism was little more than divination, and the prophets became an unscrupulous professional class. From this lower type of prophecy the true prophets were careful to distinguish their own work and vocation, and they denounced the prophetism of their day as they did other representative institutions[3]. But the earliest *nebîim* appealed chiefly to the sense of patriotism. They preached fidelity to Jahveh as the only God of Israel, and thus we may look upon them as allied with the Nazirites and the priests in keeping alive the distinctive principle of Mosaic religion—that Israel was the people of Jahveh, and that it was bound to separate itself from the pollutions of heathendom and to be loyal to its Divine king. Thus even if prophetism was, as some suppose, borrowed from the Canaanites, it meant from this time onwards something very different from what it meant to the heathen. There was at first a close connection between prophetic inspiration and mere physical excitement[4], but these phenomena were only incidental to the early stages of a movement which finds its later representatives in men like Amos and Isaiah. In fact a rude native outgrowth of the Semitic temperament is developed into the

[1] Wellhausen, *Sketch of the History of Israel and Judah*, p. 64.

[2] Cp. 1 Sam. x. 12.

[3] Mic. iii. 5; Amos vii. 14. Cp. Isai. viii. 19.

[4] See 1 Kings xviii. 46; 2 Kings iii. 15. Cp. Riehm, *ATl. Theologie*, p. 203.

highest and most glorious element in Israel's religion. When we consider to what heights prophecy afterwards soared, we cannot fail to recognise that in these lowly beginnings the Holy Spirit of God was at work[1].

Samuel and the monarchy.

Samuel also holds a place of honour in Israel's history as the virtual founder of the monarchy. Scarcely less disastrous to national unity than the religious disorganisation of the period of the judges, was the lack of a leader. The Hebrews were now sorely harassed by the Philistines, a piratical people of non-Semitic origin, who, having settled on the coast and dispossessed the original inhabitants some time before the invasion of Palestine by the Israelites, gradually forced their way into the very heart of the country and now threatened to be the dominant race in Canaan. Samuel instinctively recognised the need of a single ruler to unite the tribes and organise their resistance to Philistine oppression. The oldest tradition[2] implies that in this matter he shared and represented the universal desire for a monarchy. He regarded the kingdom as Jahveh's gift to Israel[3]; he saw no inconsistency between the monarchy and the rule of Jahveh[4]. Indeed the idea of Jahveh exercising His saving might through human representatives, endued with the divine Spirit, was already familiar. The limited power of the judges had paved the way for the rule of a king. The two offices were in fact closely connected; the chief distinction between them was

The judges and the kings.

[1] See a passage in Cornill, *Der Isr. Prophetismus*, p. 15.

[2] 1 Sam. ix. 1—x. 16.

[3] 1 Sam. viii. 7 represents the belief of the later age in which the book was compiled. The passage is coloured by 'a long course of unhappy experiences of the monarchy.' Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 660.

[4] Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 66, 'This difficulty was never felt by the mass of the Israelites nor even by the prophets in the regal period, and it was certainly not felt by Israel's neighbours....There was no difficulty in looking on the human king as the viceroy of the Divine sovereign.' (See the whole passage.)

that the authority of the judge was not so extensive as that of the king, and was not necessarily hereditary[1]. Thus the institution of the monarchy not only tended to consolidate the tribes and so to guard Israel's independence as a nation; it also gave a powerful impulse to the theocratic idea. In the human king—the *LORD'S anointed*[2], His *chosen*, His *son*[3]—was reflected the majesty of Israel's divine ruler, and the continuity of His righteous rule. In submission to the earthly prince men learned the meaning and joy of obedience, the weakness and misery of lawless self-will[4]. Thus the monarchy reacted on the prevalent conception of Jahveh. Not only at its first institution, but in subsequent days of reflection, it was hailed with pride as a signal token of Jahveh's favour[5], and the prophetic vision of the future was that of a kingdom in which the Spirit of Jahveh should rest upon an earthly ruler, reigning *in righteousness*, and feeding his people in *the strength of Jahveh, in the majesty of the name of Jahveh his God*[6].

The first three kings.

The kingdom, then, was established, and each of the first three monarchs who ruled over a united Israel had a special task allotted to him, though the first in great measure failed to fulfil it. The mission assigned to Saul was that of securing Israel's independence by protecting its borders from Philistine aggression. David not only completed the military enterprise which Saul left unfinished, but gave the Hebrews a capital which became a true spiritual metropolis as well as a political centre. Lastly Solomon built the sanctuary which was ultimately destined to become the single shrine of Israel's religion; in a true sense his reign marked a final stage in the development

[1] Smend, p. 65.

[2] The act of anointing was a mode of specially consecrating the monarch to Jahveh's service, and imparting to him Jahveh's Spirit. On the physical basis of this idea see Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 660.

[3] 1 Sam. xxvi. 9; 2 Sam. vi. 21, vii. 14.

[4] Cp. Judg. xvii. 6, xxi. 25.

[5] Deut. xxxiii. 5.

[6] Is. xi. 2, xxxii. 1; Micah v. 4.

of the theocratic state[1]. Once united under a single ruler Israel rapidly became a powerful kingdom. David by conquest acquired a territory which extended from the frontier of Egypt to Damascus and the borders of Hamath. The three neighbouring peoples, Edom, Moab, and Ammon, were compelled to own his sway. In Jerusalem he founded a royal city which vied in splendour, if not in size, with the most famous cities of Western Asia. Solomon gave an immense impetus to intellectual culture by bringing within Israel's horizon the riches and the wisdom of other nations. Thus with the establishment of monarchy a new era dawned in Hebrew history. 'From this point,' says Smend, 'dates Israel's belief in its own peculiar mission in the world; here lies the historical root of those spiritual claims which in later times it put forward. Accordingly this epoch was of fundamental importance for all future time. It was the zenith of Judah's national history. At Solomon's death it sank for ever into the position of an insignificant and petty state[2].'

The theocratic king.

At this point may be noticed the great significance for religion of the figure of the theocratic king. Such a reign as that of David completely manifested the compatibility of monarchy with the idea of a theocracy. This result was no doubt entirely due to David's personal example and ascendency. Prophets and priests instinctively rallied to his side[3], and he himself, in spite of grave faults of character, was conspicuous in his

[1] Schultz, *O. T. Theology*, vol. I. p. 154. The building of the Temple is also significant as 'the last step towards the complete localising' of Jahveh in Canaan, and the popular identification of Him with *ba'al*. (Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 646.)

[2] p. 64.

[3] Such passages as 2 Sam. iii. 9, 18, v. 2, vii. 5 foll. show that David was the centre of high prophetic hopes. On the other hand, it was the task of men like Gad and Nathan to rebuke the sins of the monarch and to guide his conscience. They were in fact 'prophets' in the later and higher sense of the word.

devotion to the service of Jahveh. Hence a unique significance was attached to the reign of David, and the prophets identified the future fortunes of the monarchy with those of David's house. In fact, the rise of the Messianic hope in its strict sense connected itself with the line of David and with the special promise vouchsafed to him by Jahveh[1]. In the light of that promise his successors on the throne of Judah were transfigured. The reigning monarch was invested with ideal attributes as the visible representative of Jahveh's sovereignty. His throne was *Jahveh's throne*[2], and each monarch was in his degree a type of the coming Messiah.

The Temple.

In this connection the building of the Temple at Jerusalem by Solomon was an event of peculiar importance. Thereby the religious policy of David reached its climax. Solomon's intention apparently was to provide a stately shrine for his own purposes; he built it in close proximity to the royal palace and borrowed some prominent features in the design from the great temple of Melkarth at Tyre. He did not in any way interfere with the *cultus* carried on at the 'high places' of Palestine; at these local shrines the debasing influences of *ba'al*-worship might, and often did, make themselves felt. But in Jerusalem at least the religion of Jahveh as the only God of Israel was firmly established; and the erection of the Temple was a first step towards that future centralisation of worship which to later generations seemed to be most consistent with the Divine will, and which paved the way for the religion of Judaism[3].

[1] 2 Sam. vii. 4 foll. This oracle seems to be post-Davidic in date, but it reflects the hopes which the men of David's own generation connected with his name and family.

[2] 1 Chron. xxix. 23.

[3] The narrative of 1 Kings xi. 7 foll. (Solomon's erection of shrines for Chemosh and other foreign deities) embodies the later (prophetic) view of Solomon's action. But to the men of his own age the proceeding might well appear a natural one. A foreign wife, having left her own country and therefore her country's gods (cp. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19), would

The disruption of the kingdom.

The disruption of the kingdom which followed the accession of Rehoboam restored to the tribe of Ephraim the supremacy which had been shattered by the incursions of the Philistines. In comparison with the northern kingdom Judah was a petty state—a mere thistle beside a cedar[1]. For a considerable time the most conspicuous religious movements were connected with Israel rather than with Judah. In Israel the prophetic communities were established; here Elijah preached the sovereignty of Jahveh and Elisha worked his miracles; here prophets like Micaiah, Hosea, and Amos of Judah proclaimed the message of judgment to come. In northern Israel, too, were apparently compiled the earliest poems and historical narratives which find a place in the Old Testament[2]. On Israel fell the brunt of the hundred years' war with Syria—a struggle which gradually determined that popular conception of Jahveh which Amos denounced. The effect of Jeroboam I's policy was to stereotype the traditional forms of worship. At Dan and Bethel, two recognised centres of pilgrimage, the worship of Jahveh under the form of an ox was established[3]; the usual Canaanitish emblems were left untouched, and, as these could only tend to a debasement of religious ideas, they were denounced by the prophets of the eighth century. Nevertheless, amid whatever misconceptions and corruptions, the religion of the northern kingdom was inspired by devotion to Jahveh as the God and King of Israel[4], in spite of the fact that it was still strongly permeated by the influence of Canaanitish nature-worship. Meanwhile in Judah the Temple of Solomon acquired new importance as a visible emblem

require a sanctuary for the worship of her ancestral deity on Israelitish soil. It was a device by which a national god might be worshipped in a foreign land. Cp. Naaman's request in 2 Kings v. 17.

[1] 2 Kings xiv. 9.

[2] See Cornill, *Einleitung in das A. T.* p. 345. Cp. Smend, p. 60.

[3] See note on p. 49. The passage 1 Kings xii. 28 shows that Jeroboam's images were intended to represent Jahveh.

[4] Cp. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 96 foll.

of the essential unity of the tribes, and as representing a comparatively pure type of worship, dissociated from the use of images and therefore more consistent with the Mosaic ideal than the religion of northern Israel[1]. Moreover, to the sacred ark attached a prestige which dated from the heroic age of the nation's history.

The cult of the Tyrian Ba'al.

A new phase, however, of *Ba'al*-worship made its appearance in the northern kingdom as the result of Ahab's alliance with Jezebel, the daughter of Eth-baal, king of Tyre Ahab, following the example of Solomon, erected in Samaria a temple to Melkarth, the Tyrian *Ba'al*. This implied the introduction into his realm of a foreign worship. Doubtless Ahab himself occasionally offered sacrifice to the Tyrian goddess, but he does not seem to have had any idea of forsaking the worship of Jahveh, as is sufficiently proved by the fact that he called his sons 'Azariah' and 'Jehoram[2],' and that, in spite of the systematic persecution instigated by Jezebel, the prophets of Jahveh numbered 400 shortly before the king's death. In any case, though the worship of the Tyrian *Ba'al* seems to have had a certain vogue in northern Israel, the latent sentiment of loyalty to Jahveh was easily roused. The 'sons of the prophets' doubtless stood firm in their allegiance, and the Rechabites, of whom we first hear at this period[3], represented the spirit of reaction against Canaanitish culture and religion.

The work of Elijah.

But the loyalty of the prophetic guilds and even of the Rechabites was perhaps not of a very intelligent or spiritual type. It was the work of Elijah to make plain the real issue involved in the conflict

[1] The bull-worship never took root in Judah. On the other hand the cult of the brazen serpent seems to have flourished from an early period down to the time of Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4).

[2] *i.e.* 'Jahveh helps,' 'Jahveh is exalted.'

[3] 2 Kings x. 15. The Rechabites may be regarded as a strict sect of Nazirites. We find them supporting Jehu in his violent measures for the extirpation of *Ba'al*-worship.

between Jahveh and *Ba'al*[1]. The cult of the Tyrian *Ba'al* with its hideous and licentious accompaniments meant for Elijah apostasy from Jahveh and declension to a sensual nature-worship. The cause of national righteousness was bound up with the triumph of Jahveh. From this point of view the judicial murder of Naboth is instructive, as illustrating the inevitable connection between a debased type of religion and social iniquity. It was probably this episode which stirred the conscience of the people and rallied them to Elijah's side in his struggle with the court. He himself confronts Ahab as the 'embodied conscience' of the theocracy[2]. But, further, we may notice that Elijah anticipated the later prophets in sharply distinguishing the cause of Jahveh from that of Israel. In the long and disastrous conflict with Syria, Israel was to learn that its enemies might be instruments of Jahveh's just vengeance, and that His purpose for His people might be one not of salvation but of judgment[3].

Thus Elijah was at issue not merely with Ahab and the votaries of *Ba'al*-worship, but with the nation as a whole, in so far as his teaching directly traversed the popular belief that Jahveh was bound under all circumstances to fight for Israel. In fact, the preaching of Elijah first brings to light that antagonism between the spiritual and the worldly interests of Israel, which later prophecy developed[4].

In Judah, as has been pointed out, the imageless worship of the Temple was a kind of safeguard of religion. Nevertheless, the *cultus* of alien deities occasionally flourished even in Jerusalem. Through the influence of Ahab's family, the worship

[1] The history of Elijah and Elisha is related chiefly in a special source contained in 1 Kings xvii.—xix., parts of xxi., and 2 Kings ii.—viii., xiii. 14—22. See Driver, *Lit. of the O. T.*[6] pp. 194 foll.

[2] Obs. the similar position of Micaiah in 1 Kings xxii., who in prophesying disaster to Ahab separates himself from the professional *nebiim*, and thus ranks with the ethical prophets of the eighth century.

[3] Consider 1 Kings xix. 14—17.

[4] Cp. Smend, p. 157.

of the Tyrian *Ba'al* was established for a time[1], and Isaiah, the earliest writing prophet of Judah, complains that the land is *full of idols*[2], and that foreign superstitions abound.

It is clear indeed that both in Israel and Judah the spirit of prophecy came into inevitable collision, not with the policy of individual kings and statesmen, but with the popular religion of the mass of the people. The preaching of the prophets was from one point of view a continuous polemic against the down-grade tendencies in Hebrew religion. Their zeal for Jahveh was directed, not against Philistine oppression, but against national unrighteousness and social iniquity. In the religious sphere the mission of Elisha was to complete the work of Elijah, by extirpating the worship of *Ba'al*, even at the cost of a political revolution instigated by himself. The narratives indicate that Elisha attained to a position of great influence and prestige, but he is not described as intervening in politics on more than one occasion. His fame as a wonder-worker lived long in Israel[3]; and he, like Elijah himself, may be regarded as a connecting link between the simple divination of the ancient 'seers' and the ethical prophecy of the eighth century.

[1] 2 Kings xi. 18. [2] Isai. ii. 8.

[3] Kautzsch notices that some incidents in his career 'recall the ecstatic conditions and magical methods of the ancient *nebîim*.' See 2 Kings iii. 15, and other passages.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE PROPHETS.

THE eighth century B.C. was a turning-point of critical importance in the political history of Israel. It was also an age of great religious teachers. In the northern kingdom prophesied *Amos* of Tekoa (*c.* 760—750); and *Hosea* (*c.* 738—734); in Judah, *Isaiah* (*c.* 740—700); and *Micah* (*c.* 725—715).

Reign of Jeroboam II.

For about a century Israel had been harassed and weakened by intermittent warfare with Syria, when Jeroboam II, the fourth king of Jehu's dynasty, began his reign (*c.* 782), and the long struggle came to an end. Israel really owed its deliverance to the westward advance of the great world-power of Assyria, which compelled the Syrians to defend their own eastern border. The difficulties of Syria were of course Israel's opportunity. Under Jeroboam the northern kingdom was left in comparative peace, and before the close of his reign attained to a maximum of internal prosperity. Its boundaries were once more extended eastward and northward to the original limits of David's kingdom[1].

But the material benefits of peace were counterbalanced by the social and economic effects of the long conflict. A

[1] 2 Kings xiv. 25: from the pass of Hamath to the Dead Sea. Part of the territory of Damascus may have been included in Jeroboam's dominions. See G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. I. p. 32.

new generation, without experience of warfare, rose to manhood. There was leisure to cultivate the arts of peace. Agriculture, trade, commerce, and literature flourished. Thus the ancient and simple conditions of life gradually disappeared. Wealth rapidly increased, but tended to accumulate in the hands of the few. The small landholders sank into poverty, and even into the position of serfs. The rich busied themselves with the acquisition of estates and the erection of palaces. Town-life with its usual accompaniments—its strongly-marked contrasts between rich and poor, its luxuries, its temptations, its artificial tastes—quickly undermined the old simplicity and independence of the Hebrew peasantry. The poor were victimised, not only by the large landowners who dispossessed them of their holdings, but by dishonest traders, harsh creditors, and venal judges. In a word 'there were all the temptations of rapid wealth, all the dangers of an equally increasing poverty. The growth of comfort among the rulers meant the growth of thoughtlessness. Cruelty multiplied with refinement. The upper classes were lifted away from feeling the real woes of the people[1].' It was in fact an age of transition from one stage of civilisation to another; and such an age is generally marked both by widespread moral decay and by a heightening of spiritual life. While the great mass of men yield to the debasing influences that surround them, the few gain a clearer spiritual insight and rise to higher levels of character. The period of Israel's decline and fall gave birth to the noblest ideals of inspired prophecy. In the spirit of religion, in the true *knowledge of God*[2], there was great and notable advance.

Effects of the Syrian wars.

It is obvious that the popular religion of this period, being such as was described in the last chapter, could not control or discipline the temper which prosperity had fostered, nor mitigate the conse-

The popular religion.

[1] G. A. Smith, *op. cit.* pp. 34 foll. [2] Hosea vi. 6.

quences of the social evils which had resulted from the cessation of the Syrian wars. Israel was, outwardly at least, devoted to its national Deity and proud of the military successes which seemed to be a sure token of His favour. There was much zeal for religion, but the type of worship which attracted festal throngs to the various local sanctuaries and 'high places' was not of a kind to elevate the moral tone of the worshippers. Not only were the sacrificial feasts occasions of tumultuous revelry and excess; not only was the actual *cultus* tainted by practices and emblems borrowed from the Canaanitish heathenism; the popular notion of Jahveh was itself a source of mischievous deception. 'To the mass of the people, to their governors, their priests and the most of their prophets, Jahveh was but the characteristic Semitic deity—patron of His people and caring for them alone—who had helped them in the past and was bound to help them still—very jealous as to the correctness of His ritual and the amount of His sacrifices, but indifferent about real morality[1].' The prosperity which followed the close of the recent wars was accepted as a decisive proof of Jahveh's regard; it was taken for granted that His interests were bound up with those of His people, and that He would unconditionally take Israel's part against its foes. So long as His continued favour could be secured by regular sacrifices at the appointed times, by copious free-will offerings and by punctilious payment of tithes and dues at the sanctuary, it was believed that Jahveh's assistance might be confidently invoked. A familiar watchword current in Israel at this epoch was *The Day of Jahveh*[2], a cry which embodied the popular expectation of some signal display of Jahveh's good will manifested in the overthrow of Israel's enemies.

The prophets.

Such were the circumstances under which the prophets came forward as the champions of social righteousness and of the purer religious faith which had

[1] G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. I. p. 40.

[2] Amos v. 18 foll.

been handed down as a tradition from Moses, but had been widely forgotten or ignored They regarded themselves in fact as the spiritual successors of Moses, and never wearied of testifying that the popular religion of their contemporaries was really a perversion of the precepts which he had taught. At Sinai Jahveh had made known to Israel His Name, His character, and His requirement. He had wrought a marvellous deliverance for His people, and in return had demanded moral obedience; not sacrifice, but mercy, justice, and the *knowledge of God*[1]. This fundamental teaching the prophets were commissioned by Jahveh to proclaim anew. They became conscious of a distinction between themselves and the professional *nebîim*, who were apt simply to echo the patriotic and nationalistic sentiments of the people, and in reality differed but little from the soothsayers or diviners of Semitic heathendom[2]. The true prophet felt himself to be not the semi-conscious and even frenzied subject of an irresistible *afflatus*, like the prophets of *Ba'al* who contended with Elijah, but the intelligent organ of a divine King and Master, illuminated and strengthened by His Spirit, and sent, not to dream dreams or reveal secrets, but to preach repentance, faith, righteousness, and the reign of God upon earth[3].

I. It is natural to consider first the prophetic doctrine concerning the being and character of God.

Prophetic conception of Jahveh.

What was lacking in the popular religion was *the knowledge of God.* The average Israelite had a firm conviction that Jahveh was the God of his nation, but he had no clear idea as to what this relationship involved. The current conception of Jahveh was virtually the same as that held by other Semitic peoples concerning their national deities[4]. The prophets accordingly are at pains to show that Jahveh had all along made manifest to Israel His nature and

[1] Hos. vi. 6. [2] Mic. iii. 5 foll.; Isai. iii. 2, 3.
[3] Mic. iii. 8.
[4] Cp. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 57 foll.

His will, and that the true Mosaic *torah* had been forgotten or perverted by the priesthood to whose guardianship it had been consigned[1]. This *torah* was not identical with the written law. The priests certainly knew of many written precepts[2], but what they are blamed for ignoring is that moral instruction, initiated by Moses, which had made *righteous conduct* the all-important element in religion. Thus in opposition to the non-ethical conception of Jahveh prevalent in Israel—the notion that His favour depended on the multiplication of sacrifices and free-will offerings—the prophets insist upon Jahveh's *holiness*. In calling Him 'holy' they apply to Him what had been usually an attribute of things dedicated to Him[3]. The epithet in fact connotes Jahveh's *separateness* from man and from all other created things. He is the *Holy One of Israel*[4], both as being the supreme object of Israel's reverence and devotion, and also as being utterly separate from the universe, and unapproachable by those who are morally, and not merely ceremonially, unclean.

The character of God.

In the 'holiness' of Jahveh, as the prophets understand it, two elements are specially emphasised: His righteousness and His lovingkindness. By the 'righteousness[5]' of Jahveh, the prophets mean the stability and self-consistency of the Divine character. Jahveh fulfils His promises in strict accordance with His own nature. If His purpose is to punish, the penalty inflicted will

[1] Amos ii. 11; Hos. iv. 6. [2] Hos. viii. 12.

[3] 'Holiness' originally = separation from profane use, consecration to the service of a deity. See Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 681 foll. He remarks, 'It has been rightly said that the holiness of Jahveh is not a single attribute (such as "moral perfection"), but a designation of His essential being, practically identical with the notion of being Divine' (p. 682 b).

[4] Isai. i. 4 and *passim*.

[5] The word צדיק 'righteous' (צדק 'to be straight' or 'right') is not actually used of Jahveh by the earlier prophets. Amos and Isaiah, however, inculcate the idea in their image of the plumb-line (Amos vii. 7, 8; Isai. xxviii. 17). The word occurs in Zeph. iii. 5; Jer. xii. 1.

exactly correspond with the sin committed[1]; if to save, the manner and effect of His redemptive acts will vindicate His righteousness. In other words, Jahveh deals with nations and men in accordance with the law of His own moral perfection. He requites them according to their deeds; He fulfils His purposes in exact conformity with His threats and promises. He is ever true to the character which He has revealed in human, and especially in Israel's, history. From the standpoint of man, Jahveh's 'righteousness' presents itself as 'truth' or 'faithfulness' (אֱמֶת),—a word which implies the stability, the dependableness of the Divine nature. In Jahveh man finds that on which he may lean with confidence; a *rock*[2] on which he may build; a quality which forms the eternal and stable foundation of the kingdom of God.

On the other hand, the most deep-seated element in Jahveh's character is *lovingkindness* (חסד). The prophet Hosea conceives the tie which unites Jahveh to Israel as a relationship of love, implying on Israel's side obedience, loyalty, and trust. The great things which Jahveh has wrought on Israel's behalf constitute an unbounded claim on its gratitude and allegiance. His tenderness to His people has been that of a father to a helpless child, that of a husband to the erring wife of his youth[3]. Jahveh has been Israel's God *from the land of Egypt*. He has ever been *mindful of His covenant* with her[4]. Further, we may notice that the conception of Jahveh's lovingkindness qualifies to some extent the doctrine of His wrath. In early Hebrew religion the idea of the Divine anger is imperfectly moralised. Jahveh's anger is kindled by slight infringements of His sanctity; it blazes forth at the least

[1] Cp. Isai. v. 16, x. 22.

[2] An ancient designation of Jahveh is 'Rock' (צוּר). See Deut. xxxii. 4; cp. Num. i. 5, 6, 10, iii. 35; Isai. xvii. 10, etc.

[3] Hos. xi. 1 foll. (cp. Isai. i. 2; Exod. iv. 22, 23); and Hos. ii. (cp. Jer. ii. 2).

[4] Hos. xiii. 4. Cp. Mic. v. 4; Ps. cxi. 5.

outrage done to His honour; its cause is not always explicable[1]. But the prophetic doctrine of the Divine 'jealousy' implies more than the unapproachable holiness of Jahveh. It means that Jahveh is unwilling to endure a rival in the possession of His land, or in the affections of His people. Hosea and Jeremiah even brand as 'adultery' the prevalent tendency to amalgamate the worship of Jahveh with that of the local *ba'alim*. But while the earlier prophets naturally dwell on the thought of Jahveh's jealousy as kindled by Israel's sin, the later prophets, Zechariah and Ezekiel, think of it as roused by regard for His people; whoever touches them *touches the apple of His eye*[2].

Such then in its main outlines is the prophetic doctrine of Jahveh's character, and here we touch upon the essential point of contrast between Israel's religion and that of the surrounding nations. *Character*, definite and consistent, was that which differentiated Jahveh from the gods of the heathen[3]; character which has manifested itself in history, and which enables men to approach Jahveh and to serve Him, to comprehend His purpose and to hold communion with Him. This is the real purport of the anthropomorphic language of the Old Testament writers. Such language is the only possible means of expressing, in terms intelligible to ordinary men, the fact that Jahveh is a spiritual and *personal* being; that He has will, character, and purpose; that He lives and acts in a moral universe of which He is the centre[4]. Thus the prophets ascribe to Him human affections: love, hatred, anger, jealousy,

[1] Cp. 1 Sam. vi. 19; 2 Sam. vi. 6—8; Exod. xix. 21—24 (J).

[2] Zech. ii. 8. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 21, 22, 36.

[3] Cp. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 66.

[4] On the entire absence of metaphysical or abstract conceptions of deity in the O. T. see Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 62 foll. Schultz well remarks (*O. T. Theology*, II. 107) that the O. T. writers 'speak like materialists, simply because they have not yet clearly apprehended the distinction between spirit and matter.'

even repentance[1]. Vividly conscious of their own immediate relationship to God, they strive to make their hearers understand that Jahveh is one with whom man can hold actual converse. Hence too the prophetic polemic against material representations of Jahveh—the calves worshipped in Samaria for instance[2]. It was the influence of the prophets that ultimately brought about the prohibition of images in the worship of God. The images were mere *'elilim*, 'nothings[3],' inasmuch as they lacked that which was an essential element in deity, namely living personality.

The omnipotence of Jahveh.

II. A second leading thought of prophecy is that of Jahveh's *omnipotence*. In the popular religion He was regarded as a powerful deity, but His power had limits. It was supposed to be bounded by the territory in which He was acknowledged and worshipped; it was limited in its display to the work of exalting and defending Israel. Jahveh was *the mighty one of Israel*[4]. But the prophets habitually employed another phrase, which suggested the thought of power extended infinitely beyond the confines of Israel. They called Jahveh 'God of Ṣeba'oth,' a term which was probably already in use and which denoted Jahveh's relation to Israel as leader of its hosts to battle. But Amos seems to impart to the phrase a new and wider sense[5]. Jahveh is the God not only of Israel's armies, but of all 'hosts'—even those of Assyria—which might be employed as the instruments of His vengeance. Thus the term is gradually extended so as to include all the forces of

[1] Hos. xi. 8. [2] Hos. viii. 4, x. 5, xiii. 2.

[3] Isai. xix. 1, 3 (the word was perhaps coined by Isaiah himself); Jer. ii. 5, etc.

[4] Isai. i. 24, xxx. 29.

[5] Amos iii. 13. Observe the title *Jahveh the God of hosts* apparently came into use at a time when Jahveh was regarded chiefly as the *war-God*. 'The hosts' were originally those of Israel's warriors (Exod. xii. 41. Cp. Ps. xliv. 10). See Kautzsch in *DB*, v. 636 foll.

nature. The armies of heathen nations, the hosts of stars, the multitude of heavenly beings who surround the throne of God —all these own Jahveh's sway and fulfil, consciously or blindly, His purposes. Thus the title *Jahveh of hosts* practically implies the omnipotence of Israel's God, and the combination of unlimited might with holiness is virtually ascribed to Jahveh in the prophetic doctrine that He is the God of universal history, and that *the whole earth is full of His glory*[1].

Ethical monotheism.

III. But the prophets were also the teachers of 'ethical monotheism'—the doctrine that Jahveh is the one and only true God.

It was acknowledged by people as well as prophets that Jahveh was the God of Israel; nay, that He was incomparable or unique among gods, and unquestionably He was held in honour as being mightier than they so long as He gave Israel victory over its heathen foes[2]. But of monotheistic faith in its true sense we find no certain traces before the period of the prophets, and centuries elapsed before it was firmly established as an unalterable element in Israel's creed. The monotheism of men like Amos and Isaiah had its roots in their ethical conception of God. It was not a product of mere reflection, still less of logical reasoning or philosophy. It was based on the conviction that as compared with the gods of the nations Jahveh was a *righteous* being, and that wherever the law of righteousness was acknowledged, however dimly and imperfectly, there His sway must necessarily extend. The prophets perceived in nature and in history the tokens of Jahveh's irresistible power, and they intuitively understood that the moral law must be co-extensive with humanity; righteousness must be the supreme law of the universe, and the

[1] Isai. vi. 3: LXX. *κύριος σαβαώθ*, and (more commonly) *κύριος παντοκράτωρ*. See Driver's additional note on *Amos* iii. 13 (Camb. Bible for Schools). Smend, p. 185 f., argues that the *widest* sense of the term is also the earliest, but see Kautzsch, *ubi sup.*

[2] Exod. xv. 11; Deut. iii. 24; 1 Kings viii. 23.

righteous God of Israel must accordingly be *the Lord of the whole earth*[1]. Thus Amos, for example, regards his prophetic mission as extended, in some sense, to the nations beyond Israel's border, in other words, to those who were outside the sphere of Jahveh's covenant yet within that of His moral governance. And in the thought that the area of Divine judgment includes the heathen as well as Israel the elements of a true universalism are contained[2].

Hence we notice in the prophets a growing tendency to give to the heathen deities titles which imply non-existence: 'no gods,' 'nothings,' 'vanity,' etc.[3] Jahveh alone is *the God*[4], living and true, supreme over all other spiritual beings, the *gods many and lords many* of heathendom. Until the exile at least, the religion of the average Israelite was 'monolatrous' rather than monotheistic; at the same time it must be recollected that this type of belief 'does not conflict with the religious conception of the unity of God so long as all other powers are regarded as merely relative, as incapable of resisting the one Supreme Being[5].' The prophets did not indeed formally deny the existence of other gods than Jahveh; but their teaching implied that these beings, even if they existed, signified nothing for Israel, and had no power either to hurt or help. The prophetic monotheism is in fact of a practical rather than a theoretic type.

Jahveh's relation to Israel.

IV. What then, according to the prophets, is Jahveh's relation to Israel? In the first place, they emphasise the relationship even while they deny that it is exclusive and absolute. The prevalent belief

[1] Mic. iv. 13.

[2] Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 147, points out that 'complete universalism is only then attained when the nations are conceived as converted to Israel's God for their own benefit and edification.' This idea, he thinks, may have been attained by Isaiah if the passage xix. 19 foll. is authentic.

[3] See a list of such titles in Schultz, *O. T. Theology*, I. 304.

[4] 1 Kings xviii. 39.

[5] Schultz, I. p. 180.

was that Jahveh was indissolubly bound to Israel; He must necessarily side with the nation against its enemies; with His people, so to speak, He Himself stood or fell[1]. Hence the ruin of the State, when it actually took place, to a great extent shattered the faith of the mass of the people. In times of distress strange cults were apt to appear and recourse was had to the foreign deities who were supposed to have proved their superiority to Jahveh[2]. But in proclaiming that the relationship between Jahveh and Israel was purely moral, the prophets implied that even the *downfall* of the nation might be a necessary vindication of Jahveh's power and righteousness. They refused, it has been justly said, 'to allow the conception of Jahveh to be involved in the ruin of the kingdom[3].' 'Where others saw only the downfall of everything that is holiest, they saw the triumph of Jahveh over delusion and error[4].' His sovereignty was manifested in the very events which seemed to prove Him weaker than the gods of the heathen. To those who, like the prophets, could read history aright, the chastisement and even the ruin of Israel had their predestined place in the fulfilment of Jahveh's redemptive purpose.

Israel's obligation.

The prophets then take as their starting-point the special relationship of Jahveh to Israel[5]. His original choice of Israel was an element in His purpose of grace for mankind at large. Israel is the people of revelation, 'the community of the true religion[6].' Though the word 'covenant' seldom occurs in this connection before the age of Deuteronomy, the idea suggested by it is present in the prophecy of the eighth century. The prophets taught that Jahveh had adopted Israel as His child, betrothed it to Himself as His spouse; and this connection involved certain moral obligations; the grace manifested in Israel's past history

[1] Smend, p. 162.
[2] Cp. Jer. ii. 13.
[3] Wellhausen, *Sketch*, etc., p. 89.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 87.
[5] Cp. Amos iii. 2.
[6] Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 20.

demanded the response of moral obedience. Israel was the people of Jahveh's choice. It had been separated from the other nations that it might reflect in its own polity and in its social conduct the character of its gracious Redeemer and King; that it *might be unto Him for a people, and for a name, and for a glory*[1]. But Israel had forgotten the moral conditions of Jahveh's covenant, and had lost sight of the true end of its peculiar calling as a 'holy' people. The service of Jahveh, the real 'knowledge' of Him[2], consisted in 'seeking' Him[3] in the way ordained by Himself. Trustful confidence in His power, obedience to His precepts, righteous dealing, humanity, good faith and mercy in relation to men—these were the things which made up the sum of religion as taught by the prophets. In antagonism to the prevalent idea that Jahveh's favour depended on the maintenance of a costly *cultus*, the prophets insist that sacrifice is not of the essence of acceptable worship; nay, that as a substitute for social righteousness it is absolutely hateful to Jahveh[4]. On the other hand, we do not find in the earliest prophets, Elijah and Amos, any direct attack upon the bull-worship of the northern kingdom. Hosea is the first who expressly condemns it. To him the worship of the calves, though ostensibly offered to Jahveh, was in fact mere idol-service; it was an act of apostasy from *the living God*[5].

Prophetic religion.

Speaking broadly, the prophets confine themselves to denouncing, first, the exaggerated importance which the popular religion attached to sacrifice; second, the existing accompaniments of the worship at the high places—the heathenish emblems, the lip-service, the unrestrained sensuality, the boastful self-confidence which robbed the *cultus* of spiritual value. The prophetic ideal

[1] Jerem. ix. 24. [2] Hos. vi. 6. Cp. Jer. xxii. 16.
[3] Amos v. 4, 6. Cp. Zeph. ii. 3.
[4] Amos v. 21 foll.; Is. i. 11 foll.
[5] Hos. xiii. 2, xiv. 3, i. 10.

was not necessarily a service of Jahveh entirely destitute of outward ceremonial[1], but a service which should reflect His holiness and be congruous with His revealed attributes. Punctiliousness in sacrifice could not be accepted as a substitute for social and personal well-doing; and in days of national peril and distress the essence of true religion consisted, not in any outward observance, but in faith, *i.e.* in trustful confidence, and in humble dependence on Jahveh as the only Saviour of Israel[2]. Just as Isaiah counselled submission to Assyria, so nearly a century later Jeremiah warned his countrymen to *bring their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people and live*[3]. Israel's only safety lay in quietness and confidence, and in patiently accepting the chastisement of its transgressions.

Prophets and priests.

It is not surprising that the prophets came sooner or later into direct collision with two classes of official persons. In the first place, there was an inevitable tendency to antagonism between them and the priests; and the dispute between Amaziah, the priest of the royal sanctuary at Bethel, and the prophet Amos, is from this point of view a very typical incident[4]. It was characteristic of the priestly *torah* that it was apt to lay stress on points of ritual, and to insist too strongly on the *minutiae* of ceremonial purity. Hosea even charges the priests with having forgotten the true *torah* of their God. It is evident that they had been deteriorated by their connection with a debased type of worship. Indeed, Hosea bitterly complains of their greed, luxury, and corruption, their frequent acts of oppression, their direct interest in the multiplication of trans-

[1] Prof. Kautzsch in *DB*, v. 686, seems to press too strongly the anti-sacrificial language of the prophets. They do not appear to reject sacrifice altogether, as he implies (arguing especially from Jer. vii. 22).

[2] Is. vii. 9, xxviii. 16, xxx. 15. Cp. Jer. xvii. 5 foll.

[3] Jer. xxvii. 12.

[4] Amos vii. 10—17.

gressions, their deeds of open and shameless violence[1]. It is evident that the sons of Eli had their spiritual successors among the degenerate priests attached to the northern sanctuaries.

True and false prophecy.

Another class denounced by the prophets—a class closely connected with the priesthood and the sanctuaries—was that of the official *nebîim* of whom we spoke in the last chapter[2]. Their tendency naturally was to encourage the spirit of nationalism; they were as a rule fanatical upholders of the current delusion that Jahveh was unconditionally pledged to befriend His land and people, and that His favour could be secured by gifts and sacrifices. Thus they played into the hands of the priesthood and were blind partisans of the popular faith. The canonical prophets accordingly describe these *nebîim* as conscious deceivers, speaking out of their own hearts what would be welcome to their hearers, and making a profession of prophecy as a mere means of livelihood[3]. By crying 'Peace, peace!' and by prophesying *smooth things*, these false prophets hardened the wicked in their sins and grieved the souls of the righteous. The essence of their falsity lay in the fact that they promised prosperity to the nation apart from moral conditions. The mark of the true prophet was that he denounced sin, called to repentance, and proclaimed judgment to come[4]. 'The spirit of true prophecy,' it has been said, 'is the spirit of the theocracy, breathes its principles, expresses its morality, and opens up its necessary and certain issues. The spirit of false prophecy is the untheocratic spirit,—the spirit that has not

[1] Hos. iv. 6—9, v. 1, vi. 9. Cp. Mic. iii. 11; Isai. xxviii. 7; Zeph. iii. 4; Jer. i. 18, vi. 13.

[2] See (*e.g.*) Hos. iv. 5; Isai. xxviii. 7; Mic. iii. 5 foll.; Jer. v. 31, xxiii. 11. Cp. Robertson Smith, *O. T. in Jewish Church*, p. 293.

[3] Mic. ii. 11, iii. 5, 11.

[4] See Mic. iii. 8; Jer. xxviii. 8. Cp. the chapter on this subject in Davidson's *O.T. Prophecy* (ch. xvii.).

taken in its principles and does not reflect its morality, and cannot project before it the true issue of the kingdom of God[1].'

The message of judgment.

And this brings us to the point of chief interest in the prophetic preaching. Jahveh was indeed, as the people boasted, *the God of Israel.* He had revealed Himself to Israel, had admitted it to a knowledge of His nature and purpose. But the Israel of the eighth century was, as we have seen, blind to Jahveh's requirement and to the conditions under which His salvation could be realised. Hence the primary mission of Hebrew prophecy was to proclaim the imminence of judgment. The Hebrew State in its existing condition must inevitably perish, because it transgressed the law of righteousness. The social iniquities which flourished with such rank luxuriance in Israel must inevitably bring upon *the sinful kingdom,* as Amos calls it[2], a crushing retribution. Jahveh being what He was—what Moses had proclaimed Him to be—just and righteous, the protector of the poor, the avenger of the helpless and oppressed, His purpose concerning His people could not be one of peace.

Thus the burden of prophetic teaching stood in sharpest antagonism to the prevalent belief. The very God in whom Israel trusted with such blind and overweening confidence would Himself overthrow the State. The very nation against whose aggression Israel had endeavoured to secure itself by forming human alliances and strengthening its defences, would be the instrument of vengeance raised up by Jahveh to execute His judgment. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth. Therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities*[3].

Assyria the scourge of God.

This was a new and startling doctrine, but it was consistent with the general teaching of prophecy concerning Jahveh's true requirement, and His moral relationship to the heathen nations of the world.

[1] Davidson, *op. cit.* p. 303.
[2] Amos ix. 8; cp. Isai. i. 4.
[3] Amos iii. 2.

That the heathen were subject to the providential governance of Israel's God, that they were answerable to Him for offences against the acknowledged laws of humanity and good faith—this was emphatically taught by Amos[1].

But we must bear in mind that in the eighth century B.C. the course of events was giving rise to a new conception—the idea of the world and the world-empire. It has been said that 'by far the greatest event in the eighth century was the appearance of Assyria in Palestine[2].' This was in fact a momentous turning-point not only in the national fortunes of Israel but in the history of religion. For about a century before the appearance of Amos Assyria had been pursuing an aggressive policy, and had been steadily extending her conquests in a westward direction. It was the pressure of the Assyrian advance which weakened and finally crushed the power of Damascus, and so gave Israel a respite from warfare. The kings of Israel used their opportunity. Jeroboam II (*c.* 782—741), though he was probably made tributary by the Assyrian conqueror, was at any rate left free for a time to expand and consolidate his dominions[3]. But in 745 Assyria again became active, and menaced Western Palestine. In 738 Tiglath Pileser III (Pul) conquered and annexed a large portion of the land of Hamath; in 734, in response to the urgent appeal of Ahaz of Judah, he turned his attention to the northern kingdom, took a number of towns in Gilead and Naphtali, and imposed upon Israel a heavy tribute. When the vassal king Hoshea withheld the tribute due to Shalmaneser IV the Assyrian forces were again put in motion, and in 722 the city of Samaria was captured by Sargon and the northern kingdom fell. The bulk of the population were transported in the usual fashion beyond the Euphrates.

Thus at frequent intervals throughout the eighth century

[1] Amos, chh. i., ii.

[2] G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. I. p. 45.

[3] 2 Kings xiv. 25. See above, p. 67.

before Christ the huge and restless empire of Assyria darkened Israel's horizon like a menacing storm-cloud, and the peculiar form which prophecy assumed in its predictions of coming judgment was coloured by the circumstances of the Assyrian advance. Assyria was the chosen instrument of Israel's chastisement, *the rod of* Jahveh's *anger*[1]; but the impending judgment was not destined to fall exclusively on Israel. Assyria was ordained to be the scourge of all the nations of Western Asia, and the very triumph which should manifest the impotence of the heathen gods would only serve to vindicate the righteousness of Jahveh. Further, the idea of a world-power, suggested by the expansion of Assyria, gave birth to a belief in Jahveh's universal dominion—His power to overrule all things for the fulfilment of His purpose[2].

The sins of Israel.

Judgment then was the primary theme of eighth-century prophecy. According to Amos and Micah, the essence of Israel's sin consisted in transgression of the laws of social righteousness; according to Hosea, in the culpable lack of the true knowledge of God. Isaiah discerned the cause of Israel's downfall in the prevalent spirit of materialism and the tendency to lean upon an arm of flesh; in the 'untheocratic idea' that Israel must be as other nations, riding on horses, building fortified cities, and seeking earthly alliances for her defence[3]. Accordingly the prophetic pictures of the impending catastrophe are not altogether uniform or consistent. All alike recognise in Assyria the scourge of God, but while Amos and Hosea predict the wholesale deportation of Israel to a foreign land, Isaiah gives prominence to the purifying effect of the judgment on the remnant that survives[4]; and when the Assyrian invasion is actually imminent he proclaims the certainty and strangeness of an approaching deliverance[5]—a deliverance proceeding from Zion, the earthly

[1] Isai. x. 5.
[2] Cp. Smend, p. 206.
[3] Cp. Davidson, *op. cit.* p. 303.
[4] Isai. iv. 4, vi. 11, vii. 21.
[5] Isai. chh. xxix.—xxxi. 'This change of opinion on the part of the

dwelling-place of Jahveh. Isaiah in fact insists, as the other prophets of this age do not[1], that the coming doom will not merely involve the destruction of sinners but will inaugurate the Messianic age, a leading feature of which is to be the acknowledgement by the heathen of Israel's God as righteous King and Judge.

The leading ideas of prophecy during this period, so far as it attempts to depict the Messianic future, are two:

Leading ideas of prophecy in the eighth century.

1. First it foretells the manifestation in judgment of Jahveh Himself. We have noticed that the prophets give a new significance to the expected 'Day of Jahveh.' The mass of their compatriots looked forward to 'the day' as one of triumphant deliverance from their foes. Amos on the contrary warns them that the day will be *darkness, and not light*[2]—a day bringing upon the State destruction sudden and complete, a day so near at hand as to wring from the prophet's lips the fateful cry, *the virgin of Israel is fallen upon her land: there is none to raise her up*[3].

If the epilogue at the close of his prophecy (ix. 8 foll.) is, as some critics have supposed, a consolatory appendix added by a later hand, we may say that the picture of the future drawn by Amos is one of unrelieved gloom. Hosea does not use the phrase 'Day of Jahveh'; but though his forecast is more pathetic in its tone than that of Amos, and is relieved here and there by brighter touches, it is essentially identical with that of the older prophet. Isaiah[4] and Micah[5] proclaim

prophet was due, above all, to the perfidy with which Sennacherib, in spite of the submission of Hezekiah and the payment of an enormous tribute by Judah, insisted upon the surrender of the city' (Kautzsch in *DB*, v. 699).

[1] The authenticity of Amos ix. 8—15 has been questioned (Smend, p. 183), but see Driver in the Camb. Bible, *Joel and Amos*, pp. 119 foll.

[2] Amos v. 18. [3] Amos v. 2.

[4] Isai. ii. 11, vii. 18 foll., ix. 7—x. 4, xvii. 1—11.

[5] Mic. iii. 12. Cp. Jer. xxvi. 18.

a similar message to the southern kingdom. *The Day of Jahveh* is to be a day of outward terror, violently disturbing the course of nature, shaking the earth, laying low the works of man, humbling his loftiness to the dust; a day of moral sifting, revealing the wrath of God against sin, destroying the sinners out of Zion, purifying and refining the nation by *the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning*. Jahveh alone is to be *exalted in that day*[1]. In the overthrow of Israel He will manifest His incommunicable majesty and power. But in the thought of Isaiah the day of wrath and terror wears another aspect; it is destined to bring relief to the oppressed, succour to the meek and helpless, enlightenment to the ignorant, joy to the righteous[2]. In this conception, however, Isaiah stands more or less alone. His utterances as the Assyrian peril drew nearer were doubtless coloured by his patriotic ardour. He was confident that the judgment, when it came, would introduce an era of Messianic blessing. *The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever*[3].

2. The other leading thought of prophecy is that Jahveh's purpose of salvation is to be realised through the agency of a scion of David's house, a prince who, when the Divine purpose of judgment has been accomplished, is destined to rule over a regenerate Israel. By some recent scholars it has been questioned whether this idea can be confidently attributed to the prophets of the eighth century[4]. To them, it is maintained, Jahveh alone is the Judge and Saviour of His people. But on the other side it may reasonably be urged that the figure of the Davidic king was of paramount importance during the struggle with Assyria. In days of peril and gloom

[1] Isai. ii. 12 foll., iv. 4.

[2] Isai. chh. xxix.—xxxi.

[3] Isai. xxxii. 17.

[4] Such passages as Isai. ix. 1 foll., xi. 1 foll.; Mic. iv. 8—v. 1; Amos ix. 8 foll.; Hos. xiv. 1—9, are regarded by some modern critics as later additions. See Kautzsch, *DB*, v. 694 a.

men's thoughts instinctively reverted to the figure of the shepherd-king whose prowess had first raised the nation to greatness, whose devotion to Jahveh had been so conspicuous, and who was believed to have been the recipient of a unique promise—the promise of an everlasting continuance of his house[1]. Such ideal descriptions of the Davidic king as we find in Isaiah xi. 1 foll. are not out of harmony with the historical situation, nor inconsistent with the prophetic manner of pointing to some future blessing as the exact counterpart of present calamity. It is quite conceivable that Isaiah should set over against a weak, unprincipled monarch like Ahaz of Judah the figure of a strong and righteous ruler, recalling the golden days of the early monarchy. We may readily suppose that 'memory, equally with the present dearth of personalities, prompted to a great desire, and with passion Israel waited for a Man,' in whom 'each age expected the qualities of power and character needed for its own troubles[2].' Whether therefore the passages in question are really the work of the eighth-century prophets or whether they embody the thoughts and hopes of a later age, at least we may hold that the image of an ideal king was no unlikely product of the age in which they wrote. At the same time it must be remembered that allusions in eighth-century literature to a Messiah of Davidic descent cannot be insisted on as indisputable, nor indeed does Isaiah in his later passages dwell upon the conception as if it were a vital and permanent element in his vision of the future. Assuming the authenticity of the passages in question, it is exceedingly strange that in chh. xxix.—xxxi., for instance, Isaiah depicts the glories of the Messianic age without any reference

[1] 2 Sam. vii. 11 foll.

[2] G. A. Smith, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. i. pp. 409 foll. The same writer points out that the picture of the Davidic king in Micah v. 1 foll. corresponded to the hopes of the *peasantry* of Judah. The coming Saviour was to be born in an obscure village—one of the common people, sharing their hardships and wrongs (*ibid.* p. 414).

to its ideal king. Whatever may have been the circumstances which suggested this great conception to Isaiah's mind, the fact remains that the figure of the Messianic king is a transitory apparition, so to speak, in his prophecy, and is speedily withdrawn from view[1].

Jahveh and the heathen.

V. The question next arises, What view did the prophets take of Jahveh's relation to the nations of the world lying beyond Israel's borders? The answer is not very easy or simple. Two points, however, are sufficiently clear. First, the prophets extend the area of judgment so as to include the heathen nations. Amos denounces in the name of the God of Israel the crimes of six neighbouring peoples, and in one case the wrong is inflicted by one heathen nation on another. Isaiah also addresses the nations, and predicts that Assyria will be in their case as in Israel's the instrument of Jahveh's vengeance. Secondly, the prophets do not hesitate to regard Assyria as a mere tool or weapon in Jahveh's hand. The restless movements of the terrible world-power are controlled by Him, and used as the means of punishing the transgressions of Israel. Further, the penalty which ultimately awaits Assyria itself is expressly attributed by Isaiah to forgetfulness on the part of the pagan conqueror that he is merely the rod of Jahveh's anger, *the staff in whose hand is His indignation*[2].

In these two leading ideas of prophecy lies the germ of universalism. The teaching of Amos and even of Isaiah does not seem to rise to the point of welcoming the heathen into the kingdom of God. At most they think of the heathen as being brought to acknowledge, whether in gratitude or in fear, the might and majesty of Israel's God[3]. There are indeed two celebrated passages which seem to go far beyond this point: the passage in the book of Micah (iv. 1—4; cp. Isaiah ii. 2—4) which speaks of the nations as travelling to Jerusalem in order

[1] Cp. Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 142; Smend, p. 222.
[2] Isai. x. 5—15. [3] Cp. Isai. xviii. 7.

to learn the way of Jahveh, and the concluding passage of Isaiah xix., depicting the two typical world-powers which had successively threatened Palestine as united with Israel in the worship of Israel's God. But it would perhaps be rash to affirm that either of these passages certainly dates from the eighth century. The most that can be confidently maintained is that the prophets of this period, while refraining from those wholesale denunciations of the heathen which are common in later prophecy of an apocalyptic type, do not rise to the splendid faith which can welcome the nations into the kingdom of God and look upon them as sharing the hopes and privileges of Israel. What was certainly new, however, to the Israelites of this period was the prophetic doctrine that the heathen also had a place within the sphere of Jahveh's governance; that they would be judged by the law of righteousness, and that they could and might minister to the fulfilment of the Divine purpose, whether of judgment or salvation.

It may be asked in conclusion, What was the actual effect of the preaching of the prophets?

Effect of the prophetic teaching.

In earlier times the prophet had stood in close relation to the reigning monarch. Thus Samuel controlled the policy of Saul and rebuked his disobedience; Nathan denounced the crime of David; Elijah was the divinely-appointed scourge of Ahab and his house. But in the prophets of the eighth century the spirit of prophecy came into collision with the temper and tendencies not only of the ruling classes but of the nation as a whole; and this antagonism was intensified in proportion as the crisis of the Assyrian invasion drew nearer. Thus we find Isaiah, after the death of Sargon (705), speaking in tones of despair of the mass of his countrymen.

The statesmen of Judah had in fact after the fall of Samaria abandoned the policy of *quietness and of confidence*[1] in Jahveh's

[1] Isai. xxx. 15.

aid and protection; they relied for safety on carnal weapons and schemes of earthly policy. It was obvious to Isaiah that his countrymen were blind to the plain teaching of events; their hearts were hardened, their eyes closed to the tokens of Jahveh's presence in their midst; the warnings of prophecy were to them *as the words of a book that is sealed*[1]. Jahveh had, as it were, hidden His face from the house of Jacob and abandoned it to its inevitable doom.

The doctrine of the remnant.

Like the other prophets of this period, Isaiah calls to repentance all who will turn and save themselves from the wrath to come; but he expresses no hope and offers no intercession for the mass of the people and their rulers. He fixes all his hopes on the little circle of his disciples—*the remnant*, *the poor*, *the meek* who were content, under the prophet's leadership, to wait for Jahveh, and to find in Him a refuge and sanctuary[2]. To these, in their separation from the rest of the people, the word of Jahveh is addressed. In this little community Isaiah saw the firstfruits of the future people of God, a spiritual *church* as opposed to a privileged nation.

The formation by the prophets of this little group of adherents marks a new epoch in Israel's religious development. It was a step towards the emancipation of religion from national and political restrictions; and in so far as it recognised in the faith of the individual soul the true link between God and man, it prepared the way for a universal religion[3]. By this means Isaiah and his successors provided for the continuance of that tradition of faith which they imparted to their disciples, and thus it came about that the religion of Jahveh, as interpreted by them, survived the decline and fall of the Hebrew State. Their teaching was not indeed new. Their function was to recall Israel to the fulfilment of its

[1] Isai. xxix. 11.

[2] Isai. viii. 13—18; cp. x. 21, xxix. 19, xxxi. 6.

[3] Cp. Smend, p. 160; Robertson Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, p. 274.

original vocation, a vocation to which Moses and his successors had all along borne testimony[1], but which Israel had forgotten or despised. The prophets were witnesses of those fundamental and far-reaching truths concerning God and His purposes which had been proclaimed at the time of the exodus, and which in their simplest and most comprehensive form are enshrined in the creed of the Christian Church. As Irenaeus points out, the earliest Gospel begins with a quotation from prophecy, *manifeste initium evangelii esse dicens sanctorum prophetarum voces, et eum quem ipsi Dominum et Deum confessi sunt, hunc Patrem Domini nostri Jesu Christi praemonstrans*[2].

[1] Cp. Amos ii. 11.

[2] Irenaeus, *c. Haer.* III. 10. 6.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY B.C.

The fall of Samaria left Judah the only remaining 'people of Jahveh,' for the exiled Israelites were soon submerged and lost to view amid the heathen population of the Assyrian empire. On Judah rested the hopes of prophecy; in the comparative purity of its worship and in the stability of its throne there seemed to be some pledge that the prophetic ideals would ultimately be realised.

It is doubtful to what extent the influence of Isaiah actually affected or controlled the religious policy of Hezekiah. It may be gathered from Isai. viii. 16 foll. that the great prophet, despairing of the moral and religious condition of the people at large, concentrated his attention on a small band of disciples who could be trusted to cherish his teaching and hand it on to posterity. The formation of this little community of faith has been already mentioned[1]. Probably Hezekiah did not feel himself strong enough to undertake any very drastic measures of reform. We read of his destroying the brazen serpent, most likely at Isaiah's instigation, but the statement that he abolished the local sanctuaries and destroyed the *maṣṣêboth* and the *'ashêrah* is not free from difficulties. In any case the reforms of Hezekiah were without permanent effect. Isaiah, however,

[1] See above, p. 89.

had succeeded in transmitting to his disciples conceptions of Jahveh which were destined to bear fruit in the reign of Josiah.

The reaction under Manasseh.

For more than sixty years, however, after Hezekiah's death (*c.* 695) the voice of prophecy seems to have been stifled. The long reign of Manasseh was a period of disillusionment and spiritual reaction. Isaiah had spoken as if the Assyrian invasion was destined to usher in the age of Messianic deliverance and peace. Jerusalem was to be the capital of a regenerated State, the permanent abode of Jahveh, the centre of a reformed worship. But Manasseh's succession did not alter the condition of Judah, which still remained tributary to Assyria. Indeed, the great empire, by its overthrow of Egypt[1], seemed to have rivetted its yoke on the neck of the subject-peoples more firmly than ever. Manasseh himself was from choice or necessity a partisan of Assyria. In matters of religion he returned to the policy of Ahaz; his introduction of Assyrian star-worship[2] was perhaps intended either to strengthen the ties between himself and his suzerain or to propitiate the deities of the conqueror. His action was approved by the mass of the population, and by those among the ruling class who had strenuously resisted the influence of the prophets and had resented even the moderate reforms attempted by Hezekiah. A recrudescence of the worst features of the old *cultus* took place. The *'ashêrim* and other emblems of *Ba'al*-worship were replaced or maintained in the Temple; necromancy and witchcraft flourished; there was even some revival of human sacrifice[3]. In a word, the cause for which Isaiah and his adherents had laboured was completely discredited. Indeed, a fierce persecution of those who remained loyal to the teaching of the prophets was set on foot.

[1] This took place during the reign of Esar-haddon, 681—668.

[2] 2 Kings xxi. 5, xxiii. 12.

[3] Probably children were sacrificed to Jahveh under the title of 'Moloch' (or 'Milk') 'king'; or the worship of Jahveh was co-ordinated with that of Moloch. Cp. Jer. vii. 31, xix. 5.

Manasseh *shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another*[1]. So prominent in fanaticism and violence was the king that in the eyes of the Deuteronomic compiler of the books of Kings his apostasy was the immediate cause of the destruction of the Jewish State[2]. It is probable that a passage incorporated in the book of Micah (Mic. vi. 1—vii. 7) reflects the sufferings of the faithful at this period[3].

The prophecy of Zephaniah.

Whatever may have been the extent of the reaction or the degree of Manasseh's guilt, it is certain that the ideals of Isaiah practically faded away[4]. For more than half a century his disciples and followers were powerless, and it was only the course of external events that roused Judah to a sense of the perils involved in its religious declension, the full consequences of which became manifest when Josiah, a child of eight years, succeeded to the throne (*c.* 639). There was no immediate cessation of the abuses and iniquities which Manasseh had encouraged. But beyond the borders of Palestine events of grave significance were occurring which could not fail to quicken the national conscience and excite apprehensions of coming disaster: the rapid collapse of the huge empire of Assyria, and the inroads of the Scythians, which wrought fearful havoc and spread dismay and terror throughout Western Asia. To this period we may assign the activity of the prophets Zephaniah and Jeremiah. Zephaniah, who may have been a descendant of the royal house of Judah, seems to have prophesied about thirteen years after the accession of Josiah, at a time when Judah was panic-stricken by rumours of the advance of the Scythian hordes, and when the call to repentance seemed likely to be effectual. Zephaniah

[1] 2 Kings xxi. 16. [2] 2 Kings xxi. 11 foll.

[3] Cp. Jer. ii. 30. One consequence of the persecution may have been the literary labour which welded into a continuous book (JE) the two earliest documents of the Pentateuch. See G. A. Smith, *Twelve Prophets*, vol. II. 9.

[4] On the causes of this see G. A. Smith, *op. cit.* vol. II. 1.

begins by announcing the imminence of the day of Jahveh—*a day of wrath, of trouble and distress, of wasteness and desolation, of darkness and gloominess, of clouds and thick darkness*[1]. That day, he declares, will overwhelm with destruction all the emblems of idolatry with its votaries—the idolatrous priests[2], the worshippers of the host of heaven, all *them that are turned back from Jahveh, and those that have not sought Jahveh nor inquired after Him*[3]. Jahveh has prepared a sacrificial feast, and His guests are those fierce barbarians whom He has called to execute His vengeance on Judah[4]. It was indeed not merely idolatrous worship of a peculiarly debased type that was bringing upon Jerusalem the Divine judgment, but a widespread national apostasy. Many had sunk into practical atheism or into blank indifference, saying in their hearts *Jahveh will not do good, neither will he do evil*[5]. Both Zephaniah and Jeremiah, like their predecessors, perceived that the doom of a State in this condition was inevitable. They could but summon all the better disposed to *seek Jahveh*, to separate themselves from the social and moral corruption which had invaded Judah like a flood, and by humble submission to hide themselves in the day of Jahveh's wrath[6]. Thus in the prophecy of Zephaniah we find the Isaianic doctrine of the remnant once more proclaimed. The old Israel must perish; the new Israel will consist of the afflicted and poor who have sought Jahveh and looked to Him for salvation[7].

Jeremiah.

Jeremiah's earliest prophecies belong to the thirteenth year of Josiah (626). He also may have been moved to come forward by the pressing peril of the Scythian inroads[8]. More distinctly than Zephaniah he attri-

[1] Zeph. i. 15.

[2] On כמרים (Zeph. i. 4) see *Encycl. Bib.*, *s.v.* 'Chemarim.'

[3] Zeph. i. 6. [4] Zeph. i. 7.

[5] Zeph. i. 12. In other words, 'Jahveh has proved His impotence; He is no match for the gods of the world-empires' (Kautzsch).

[6] Zeph. ii. 3. [7] Zeph. iii. 12.

[8] These seem to be alluded to in Jer. iv. 7, v. 15 foll., vi. 23.

butes the calamities now manifestly impending to Judah's apostasy. The nation had forsaken Jahveh like a faithless wife, like backsliding children[1]. They had *changed their glory for that which doth not profit*[2]. If Zephaniah dwells mainly on the moral offences which were drawing down on Judah Jahveh's retribution, Jeremiah finds the cause of ruin in the perversion of worship and the wholesale introduction of idolatrous rites. In this respect Jeremiah seems to have pointed out the direction afterwards followed by Josiah in his attempted reformation. The great need of the moment must have appeared to be the purification of the *cultus*, the abolition of the heathenish rites introduced by Manasseh, and the inculcation of true prophetic ideas touching Jahveh's requirement. For even those who were faithful to Jahveh were apt to seek His favour by multiplication of stated sacrifices, and by expending their zeal on the mere externals of the Temple-worship. Thus they needed the warning of Jeremiah that what Jahveh had ever demanded was not sacrifice, but obedience; not external devotion, but moral amendment[3].

The book of Deuteronomy.

In the year 621 took place an event of crucial importance—the discovery of 'the book of the law' by the priest Hilkiah. It is unnecessary to discuss here the various theories that have been suggested as to the origin and character of this document. There are clear indications that it consisted of certain parts of the book of Deuteronomy (probably chh. v.—xxvi., xxviii.). It may have been compiled by adherents of what is sometimes called 'the prophetic party,' possibly themselves priests, during the troublous times of Manasseh's reign, and deposited for safe preservation in the Temple. The great object of the book apparently is to revive the fundamental principles of Mosaic religion, in accordance with the cherished ideals of prophecy. Accordingly the teaching of Deuteronomy is based on the decalogue and 'the Book

[1] Jer. iii. 14, 20. [2] Jer. ii. 11. [3] Jer. vii. 1—26.

of the Covenant,' and its most characteristic feature is the predominance of the moral over the ceremonial element. In all its ruling ideas the book is evidently dependent on the prophecy of the eighth century, especially perhaps in its conception of Jahveh as supreme, not only in might, but in goodness and in truth. Jahveh is bound to His people by a relationship of love, and love is Israel's true response to the undeserved favour of God[1]. In general, the influence of earlier prophecy on the book is unmistakeable[2]. In its uncompromising monotheism and in its enactments as to the *cultus* it reflects the spirit and teaching of Amos and Hosea, Micah and Isaiah.

In the view of the compilers of Deuteronomy the only hope of purifying the worship of Jahveh lay in the abolition of all the local sanctuaries and the restriction of sacrifice to the Temple at Jerusalem. They doubtless believed that, Jahveh being the one and only God, there could not be more than one centre of worship[3]. And as the popular religion was the open door, so to speak, through which heathenism was continually breaking in upon Israel, the total suppression of the rural sanctuaries, together with all images and emblems connected with them, seemed to be the only method by which the service of Jahveh could be effectually purged of any heathen taint[4]. The rigorous strictness of the religious policy advocated in Deuteronomy is the more remarkable when contrasted with the spirit of humanity and gentleness which pervades its social regulations. The same

[1] Deut. iv. 37, vii. 8, xxiii. 5. Cp. vi. 5 foll., x. 12, xi. 13.

[2] Specially perhaps in the distinction between true and false prophecy, Deut. xiii. 1—5, xviii. 20—22. Cp. Mic. iii. 5 foll.

[3] Probably also the great deliverance of Jerusalem in 701 had prepared the way for the belief that Jahveh could only be duly worshipped in the Temple as His chosen sanctuary and dwelling-place.

[4] See Deut. xii. 2—5, xiv. 23, xv. 20, xvi. 5, 6. For the prohibition of images see iv. 15 foll.; of *massêboth*, xii. 3; of *'ashêrim*, xvi. 21; of divination, etc., xviii. 9 foll. On the teaching and affinities of the book see the monograph of O. Procksch, *Geschichtsbetrachtung etc. bei den Vorexilischen Propheten* (Leipzig, 1902), pp. 59 foll.

code which enjoins the merciless extermination of the idolater and the false prophet, claims pity and consideration for the widow and the orphan, for the captive and the runaway slave, for the stranger and the day-labourer.

The outcome of the discovery of 'the book of the Law' was that Josiah promptly set on foot a thoroughgoing reformation of religion. Without going into minute detail it may suffice to describe summarily the leading results of the movement.

In brief, the local sanctuaries were swept away and with them all objects connected with the worship of *Ba'al*[1]. The Temple itself was purged from all emblems of this kind, such as the *maṣṣêboth* and *'ashêrim*; the idolatrous priests were removed; the cult of the 'Queen of Heaven' and of the heavenly bodies, originally borrowed from Assyria, was totally suppressed, and all altars dedicated to the service of foreign deities were destroyed. The place which custom had allotted to the sacrifice of children to Moloch was defiled; and finally, the priests attached to the rural 'high places' were removed to Jerusalem and were there allowed to minister in the Temple as inferior assistants of the official (Zadokite) priesthood[2].

Effects of Josiah's reformation.

The far-reaching consequences of Josiah's reformation only became fully manifest in a later age. Two points, however, call for special attention.

It is obvious that the abolition of the local 'high places' struck a blow at the whole institution of sacrifice. It was indeed no slight revolution to degrade the traditional holy places, and to give pre-eminence to Jerusalem, which was not one of the ancient sanctuaries of Canaan. But the Law of Deuteronomy further involved the secularisation of what had hitherto been a comparatively rare and quasi-religious act—the

[1] 2 Kings xxiii. 4, 5, 14, 15.

[2] The reform was in fact the result of an alliance between the adherents of the prophets and the Zadokite priesthood. If the Deuteronomic Law was to be enforced, the Temple-priests must be enlisted in its favour, since it was chiefly concerned with *cultus*.

slaughter of animals for food. This change carried with it the consequence that sacrifice ceased to be an indispensable element in worship. The old, joyous type of religion, which for so many centuries had been traditional in the rural districts, was now branded as illegal and even idolatrous. There was to be no sacrifice of victims elsewhere than in the capital on the occasion of the three great yearly feasts. Henceforth 'men were to rejoice according to the provisions of a written law, away from their homes and from all those scenes and associations which had been, perchance, the best elements in those feasts of former times[1].' Thus, for the time at any rate, the close relation subsisting between religion and common life was interrupted. The great annual festivals, which had been so intimately connected with the daily pursuits of the common people, were explained in the book of Deuteronomy as memorials of certain incidents or epochs in the national history[2]. Henceforth in the popular religion there was a tendency to substitute prayer and the study of the Law for animal-sacrifice.

The other conspicuous feature of the Deuteronomic reformation was the fact that a book was made the foundation of the covenant between Jahveh and Israel which was now solemnly renewed[3], and from this point onwards a legalistic element, never again to be overcome, enters into Jewish religion. It is an interesting question whether the prophet Jeremiah was unreservedly favourable to the new movement or not. It seems probable that he was inclined, in the first instance at any rate, to welcome the new Law-book[4]. Its strongly ethical tone, its comparative depreciation of sacrifice, the spirit of humanity which pervaded its enactments, were all in close harmony with the traditional teachings of prophecy. Moreover, the book dealt a death-blow to the heathen practices

[1] Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 186.

[2] See Deut. xvi.

[3] 2 Kings xxiii. 3.

[4] Possibly Jer. xi. 3 refers to the book of Deuteronomy. Cp. the language of 2 Kings xxiii. 2, 21.

which had corrupted the worship of Jahveh, and had so often led Judah into practical apostasy. But it would seem that the Deuteronomic movement, which began hopefully, was soon perverted. The book which had formed the charter of a new covenant with Jahveh was extolled as a national possession; the legalistic temper, once kindled, undermined the spirit of religion; there was a great elaboration of the Temple-worship without any corresponding moral amendment. Even if Jeremiah did not ultimately denounce the book, or at least disparage its importance[1], he manifestly came to feel that the newly-kindled zeal of the priesthood had been misdirected, and that the people as a whole had fatally mistaken the true nature of Jahveh's requirement[2]; and indeed, the Law-book was largely concerned with the externals of religion, and seemed to countenance the notion that by the elaboration of worship the favour of Jahveh might be permanently secured. Hence in his public teaching Jeremiah ignored the ceremonial ordinances of Deuteronomy, and laid stress upon it simply as moral law. He perceived that the centralisation of the *cultus* at Jerusalem did in fact tend to strengthen the merely nationalistic temper of the population, which was already inclined to elevate into an indisputable dogma Isaiah's doctrine of the inviolability of Zion. Thus in controverting the popular estimate of the new Law-book, in opposing the moral law of Deuteronomy to the law of worship, and in proclaiming that Jahveh's will was to be ascertained through the living voice of prophecy rather than through the letter of a written code, Jeremiah was working towards the liberation of religion from the fetters of nationalism. The antagonism between what may be called the prophetic and the priestly elements in Judah became intensified when the premature death of Josiah quenched the last hopes of patriotism; the accession of Jehoiakim was signalised by a recrudescence of the very abuses against which the Deuteronomic reform was originally directed.

[1] This may be the purport of Jer. viii. 8.

[2] See Jer. vii.

Thus, although the evident intention of the Deuteronomists was to embody in written form the characteristic teachings of eighth-century prophecy, the motive and origin of their work were speedily forgotten, and Deuteronomy came to be regarded as predominantly a law of worship. The legal element in it was looked upon as primary and authoritative, while the task of the prophets was limited to explaining and applying its provisions. The compilers in fact overestimated the importance of a legal reformation. They hoped by better institutions to produce better men; they hoped that by purifying the *cultus* they would raise the average standard of morality. Even when the Deuteronomists insist on religious affections—fear, love, joy—as the chief element in acceptable service, their language suggests that devotion to God finds its natural expression in obedience to the law of worship. In fact, the authors of the book appeared to set matters of ritual above the living word of Jahveh, and the Deuteronomic covenant became the occasion of a retrogression from the ideals of prophecy.

Effect of Josiah's death.

The death of Josiah at Megiddo and the defeat of the army of Judah by Necho were a terrible shock to the party of reform. Under Jehoiakim a reaction took place; the provisions of Deuteronomy were ignored, and idolatry to some extent revived. Meanwhile those who remained loyal to Jahveh imagined that the calamities of the State were due to remissness in the *cultus*, and that by costlier offerings they would win back the Divine favour. This party comprised a large proportion of the prophets and priests. In spite of the catastrophe which had robbed them of their king, the people at large were apparently still convinced that Jahveh would protect His city and sanctuary. Jeremiah found himself almost alone in proclaiming the need of repentance and amendment; in opposition to the delusive promises of false prophecy he predicted the imminent destruction of Judah. He explicitly rejected the Isaianic doctrine of the inviolability of Jerusalem, which the false prophets had eagerly adopted; there

remained for the city and for the Temple only a complete overthrow. The king of Babylon was the predestined instrument of Jahveh's vengeance. The revolt of Jehoiakim from Babylon in 598 marked the hour when Jeremiah's predictions were to find fulfilment. But the temper of misguided nationalism refused to yield to his warnings. The typical utterance of a certain Hananiah[1] shows how obstinate and deeply-rooted was the delusion which Jeremiah vainly sought to dispel. If the people of Judah, with their rulers, had given heed to Jeremiah's warnings, if the policy of unconditional submission to the Babylonian conqueror had been adopted, the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 and the final deportation of its inhabitants might have been averted.

Survey of this period.

It is possible, on a survey of the period briefly traversed in this chapter, to discern, in spite of the reactionary tendencies which marked the closing years of the seventh century, some measure of religious progress.

Monotheism.

In the first place, the monotheism of the prophets had finally established itself. This is sufficiently clear from the language of Deuteronomy and from many statements of Jeremiah. The passage Deut. iv. 39, for example, a passage compiled probably at or soon after the close of the seventh century, is a plain assertion of monotheism. Again, Jeremiah habitually contrasts Jahveh with the deities of the heathen *which yet are no gods*[2], and proclaims the universality of His rule. It is true that he describes the heathen deities as the 'fathers' of their respective peoples[3], but he regards them as unable to profit, dumb, weak, helpless, and practically non-existent[4]. Jahveh is the only hope of all *the*

[1] See Jer. xxviii. 2—4.

[2] Jer. ii. 11.

[3] Jer. ii. 27.

[4] Jer. ii. 27, x. 3—14. (Cp. 1 Kings xviii. 27 foll.) Jeremiah practically identifies the heathen gods with their images, as the later Isaiah does.

ends of the earth, the creator of good and evil, the One God, in dependence upon whom all the nations of the earth are one and alike[1]. At a later time the deep significance of Jeremiah's doctrine was perceived. In the hands of the great prophet of the exile what was as yet a national faith was expanded into a universal religion.

Religion and the individual.

The same contact of Israel with the world-powers which ministered to the growth of a true monotheism led also to a new regard for individuality. The prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries were concerned with the State, and with individuals only in so far as they held a representative or official position. So in the book of Deuteronomy the idea of Israel's *national* predestination is very prominent[2]. The burden of the prophetic message to Israel was the necessity of social righteousness if the State was to be saved from ruin. But towards the close of this period the judgment, so long foretold, broke upon innocent and guilty alike Zephaniah bade *the meek of the land seek righteousness, seek meekness*, if so they might be *hid in the day of Jahveh's anger*[3]. But it remained for Jeremiah to give an impulse to the idea that the individual soul might stand in direct relationship to the God of Israel. In this development of thought the prophet's personal experience doubtless played a great part. In his own life of personal communion with God he had found a refuge and solace amid the calamities which had fallen on his people. His peculiar vocation in fact isolated him from his countrymen; he was not so much a leader of his fellows as an intercessor on their behalf. He stood alone, and apart from *the assembly of the mockers*[4]—alone in his yearning for an entire conversion of heart, alone in his sense of the need of Divine grace, alone in his awe of Jahveh's judgments. He realised, as perhaps none had done before him, that the God

[1] Jer. xvi. 19 foll. Cp. the remarkable prediction in xii. 14 foll.
[2] Cp. Deut. iv. 37, vii. 7, 8, ix. 5, x. 15.
[3] Zeph. ii. 3.
[4] Jer. xv. 17, cp. xvii. 14.

of Israel's history was also the God of each single Israelite. It has been truly said that with this separation of the individual human soul from its people the tragedy of Hebrew religion reaches its highest point[1]. Jeremiah was driven by the sense of his own utter isolation to face the question, What was the destiny of the individual amid the ruin of the nation? He instinctively felt that the extreme consequences of evil must be confined to the individual sinner. *Everyone shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge*[2]. The reality of individual responsibility, the efficacy of personal repentance—in these are laid the foundations of an essentially spiritual conception of religion.

The new covenant.

With the sense of individual relationship to God the idea of a new covenant is probably to be connected[3]. The conception of a covenant, binding the nation to Jahveh, is believed by some scholars to have been introduced into Jewish religion by the book of Deuteronomy; and, as we have seen, the book itself was taken as the basis of the covenant described in 2 Kings xxiii. 3. But Jeremiah predicts a covenant of a more comprehensive character, involving, not the visible redemption of Israel from its enemies, but its spiritual regeneration. *After those days, saith Jahveh, I will put my law in their inward parts and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother saying, Know Jahveh: for they shall all know me from the least even unto the greatest of them, saith Jahveh: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more*[4]. The Law should one day be

[1] Procksch, p. 84. [2] Jer. xxxi. 30.

[3] There seems to be no valid ground for doubting that this idea is Jeremiah's own: but some recent writers doubt the genuineness of ch. xxxi. 31—33.

[4] Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Obs. that in this passage, as elsewhere in the O.T., the word ברית implies rather an 'ordinance' or 'disposition' on God's part (*διαθήκη*) than an 'agreement' between two parties (*συνθήκη*).

written not on tables of stone but on hearts of flesh, and in becoming a personal relationship to God religion was destined to acquire a universal character[1].

This type of teaching supplied the foundation on which Ezekiel strove to build up in the exiles a sense of personal sinfulness, and a desire for renewal through the gift of Jahveh's Spirit. The two prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, are at one in pointing to a time when the sum of religion will consist in the knowledge of God as a personal possession of the individual soul. It is obvious, moreover, that this line of thought suggested a further enquiry into the destiny of the human soul in a future state[2]. Although no speculative advance in regard to this doctrine was made during the troubles of the seventh century, the conditions of the problem were gradually being realised. The question was naturally raised how far the individual was responsible for the sins of the nation, and why the innocent were involved in the sufferings of the guilty? The latter problem was specially acute in the age of Jeremiah: for the judgment which Israel had brought upon itself by its apostasy and idolatry actually fell upon a generation which had earnestly set itself to *seek Jahveh*. What a number of unsolved enigmas the experience of righteous men in such an age suggested! The book of Habakkuk presents us with one aspect of the problem; Habakkuk seeks an answer to questionings which must have been widely raised in those rough and cruel days when the empire of Babylon was forcing its way to supremacy. In one pathetic figure—that of Jeremiah —the characteristics of the time find their embodiment. He represents a type—that of 'the man of sorrows' who bears in his own person with wholehearted submission the calamities

[1] See pp. 162, 163 below.

[2] As Kautzsch remarks (*DB*, v. 669), the conception of *She'ol* was rather a part of the popular faith than of Hebrew religion proper. There seems to be nothing in pre-exilic prophecy which implies any actual development of the doctrine of a future life.

which the guilt of others had incurred. The true function and virtue of such sufferings as those of Jeremiah were only understood by faithful Israelites in the light of the deepened experience brought by the exile in Babylon.

The fall of Judah.

After the death of Josiah events moved rapidly towards the final catastrophe. Nineveh fell in the year 607; at Carchemish in 605 the final struggle between Egypt and Babylon for the supremacy of Western Asia was brought to an issue. From that time forward Palestine lay at the mercy of Nebuchadnezzar. Already during Jehoiakim's reign a number of the inhabitants of Judaea had been carried captive to Babylon. In 597 after the accession of Jehoiachin the process was repeated, and a deportation on a large scale took place. Finally, on the occasion of Zedekiah's revolt Judah was invaded by the army of Nebuchadnezzar, and Jerusalem was besieged. In 586 the city was taken; the Temple and all the principal buildings were destroyed; the sacred vessels of the sanctuary were confiscated, and the bulk of the inhabitants were removed to Babylon. From this point onwards the maintenance of Israel's religion depended upon the constancy of the exiled community in Babylon.

CHAPTER VII.

ISRAEL IN EXILE.

The exile.

To the historian of religion the exile is not merely a great upheaval, a total revolution in the external circumstances of the chosen people. It is of interest chiefly as being the occasion of an immense change in the thoughts of men about religion. The Captivity finally broke the connection between the service of God and the outward forms in which it had for centuries found its embodiment. Worship of the old semi-pagan type, which had been the occasion of so many abuses, was now impossible. Prophecy had culminated in the fulfilment of its message. The prophets of Israel had foretold judgment, and judgment, complete and overwhelming, had come. Even in punishing Israel Jahveh had vindicated the truth of His word. Hence the catastrophe of the exile was the starting-point of a fresh development in religious thought; it re-awakened and purified faith. For a time indeed, before the destruction of Jerusalem, there seems to have been a fanatical 'nationalist' party among the exiles in Babylon, cherishing the illusion of a speedy restoration to Palestine[1]. The effect of the actual fall of the city, however, differed in different cases. The faith of some was finally shattered. Jahveh, they thought, had proved His impotence. The nation was irretrievably cut off; its hope was lost[2]. Others

[1] See Jer. xxix.

[2] Ezek. xxxvii. 11.

sank into a condition of listless despondency, crushed by the sense of the national sins which had incurred such overwhelming retribution. *We pine away* in our transgressions, was their cry: how then *should we live*[1]? To others again the exile was a purifying discipline. It vindicated and enforced the spiritual lessons of prophecy; it invited men anew to that conversion of heart, that diligence in seeking Jahveh, which the prophets had preached with such small practical effect. These faithful Israelites were probably few in number, but the hopes of a brighter future for the nation were centred in them. Though many, perhaps the great mass, of their compatriots were hardened by misfortune, and virtually abandoned their ancestral religion, as we may gather from the stern descriptions of Ezekiel[2], yet there was a remnant which could read aright the solemn lessons of calamity, which still clung to the hopes held out by prophecy, and earnestly believed that 'Israel's death was but a passing over into a new life[3].' The exiles had much to suffer, but they were sustained by the thought of the unchanging purpose of mercy which had so often brought blessing out of misfortune. In a spirit of humble and hopeful penitence they waited for the consolation of Israel.

Condition of the exiles.

We know very little concerning the *status* and condition of the exiles in the Babylonian empire. They seem to have been on the whole unmolested, and apparently they maintained to some extent their ancient customs and organisation[4]. The scattered communities had their elders, who exercised a kind of magistracy. Individuals probably acquired riches by trading, and certain Jews, as is evident from the general purport of books like Daniel, Esther, Tobit and Susanna, rose to influential positions in the Chaldean, and subsequently in the Persian empire.

[1] Ezek. xxxiii. 10.
[2] See chh. ii., iii., xiii., xiv. Cp. Jer. xliv. 17 foll.
[3] Schultz, vol. I. p. 321.
[4] See Jer. xxix. 4 foll.; Ezek. xiv. 1, xx. 1, xxxiii. 30.

Probably the position of the Jews was much less favourable at first than at a later time. We find Jehoiachin after many years of captivity meeting with kindly treatment at the hands of Evil-Merodach[1]. The Jewish community in Babylon continued to regard Jerusalem as the true centre of the national life; indeed there is some reason to suppose that sacrifice was offered on the site of the ruined Temple, even after the fall of the city[2]. But in Babylon sacrifice was impossible, and the only means of keeping alive the spirit of nationality was a punctilious observance of those customs which could be practised without interference on foreign soil. The rite of circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, stated fasts, especially on anniversaries connected with the fall of the city[3], distinctions of food, formal lustrations, and prayer offered towards Jerusalem[4]—these were the distinctive exercises of piety among the exiles. Worship of course necessarily changed its character. Meetings were held beside the rivers or canals for the purposes of common prayer. At a later period fixed forms of prayer and the public reading of the Law became customary. Nor did the Jews altogether lack prophetic guidance. From an early period of the captivity, they were under the resolute leadership and pastoral care of the great Ezekiel.

Ezekiel.

Ezekiel was in all probability a Temple-priest of Zadokite descent, and had doubtless been powerfully influenced by the example and teaching of Jeremiah. In large measure he shared the ideas of his predecessor, and continued his work. He was apparently carried captive to Babylon with king Jehoiachin in 597, and five years later (592) he entered on his public career as a prophet at a place called Tel-Abib, where he had settled down in the midst of a colony of Jews.

In some respects Ezekiel attaches himself closely to his

[1] 2 Kings xxv. 27.
[2] Cp. Jer. xli. 5.
[3] Zech. vii. 1 foll.
[4] Dan. vi. 10.

predecessors, the pre-exilic prophets. He shares their pessimistic view of the nation's past history; he paints in dark colours the infidelity and ingratitude of Israel. He believes, however, in the possibility of a regenerated nation, restored to its former estate under a representative of the old Davidic dynasty Like his predecessors, he looks for a direct personal intervention of Jahveh, in order to fulfil His purpose of grace concerning Israel[1]. He anticipates the advent of a Messianic age, which shall bring to Israel victory over its foes and the blessings of a secure and settled life in Palestine. But on the other hand Ezekiel differs from the older prophets both in his personal position and in his conception of religion.

Ezekiel's position.

As regards personal position, we may think of Ezekiel as engaged to some extent in a regular pastorate of souls. In this respect he is more than a prophet. An important part of his work is the task of rebuking, instructing, and consoling the people among whom he dwells. He labours to cultivate among his countrymen the temper of humility, of personal repentance, of confidence in Jahveh's mercy. His mission is to justify God's dealings with Israel, and to keep alive in individual souls the faith which was ready to perish under the pressure of adversity. As in other troubled periods of human history, so during the exile, the distresses of the nation ministered to the growth of individual faith. When national hopes were extinguished men found comfort in the practice of personal religion, and sought the kingdom of God in their own hearts and lives.

[1] Obs. the connection of these two ideas in Ezek. xxxiv. Jahveh intervenes *in person* to defend and save His flock (11 foll.), and sets over them His servant David, *i.e.* a governor or 'prince' (*nâsi'*) ruling in the spirit of David (23 foll.), and shepherding the people in Jahveh's name. The dominant thought is clearly that of a *divine* deliverer of Israel. So in xxxvii. Jahveh Himself dwells among His people as their ruler and protector; the language as to the Davidic 'king' (24, 25) is slightly stronger than in xxxiv. 23, but has essentially the same significance. There is no actual identification of the human 'prince' with the Divine deliverer.

Ezekiel as prophet.

Ezekiel's office, however, was by no means confined to the work of pastoral oversight. He is a prophet in the strictest sense—in his method, in his authoritative tone, in his consciousness of mission. Characteristic of Ezekiel, as of earlier prophets, are symbolical actions and visions, a wide outlook, as from a watch-tower, over the heathen world, and a tendency to survey retrospectively the national history in order to read the lessons of undeviating experience. In certain points he modifies the current theory of Jahveh's retributive justice. There was a tendency among the exiles to trace their present misfortunes to the transgressions of their forefathers. But Ezekiel qualifies the principle that men are involved in the consequences of ancestral sin by insisting equally upon the fact of personal responsibility and upon the efficacy of sincere repentance. Every soul is separately accountable to God; *the soul that sinneth, it* alone *shall die*; and in this thought of the emancipation of the individual soul, both from an ancestral doom and from the consequences of personal sin, we perhaps find Ezekiel's most significant contribution to religious progress. Not less characteristic, however, is the *legalistic* tendency of Ezekiel's teaching. His vision of the Messianic future is coloured by priestly ideas, and by the principles already enunciated in the book of Deuteronomy. In his eyes, the present need of Israel is its reconstitution as a separate people —its severance from the world being marked by the peculiar features of its worship and by a system of ordinances calculated to protect it from the pollutions of heathendom.

Amid the fluctuating tendencies of a transitional epoch the theology of Ezekiel presents a system of ideas which largely determined the subsequent direction of religious thought. It is accordingly worth while to examine it in more detail.

1. In the first place, Ezekiel is a genuine disciple of the Deuteronomic school. He attributes Israel's misfortunes to the ingratitude with which it had requited all the lovingkindness

of Jahveh. Jahveh had rescued the house of Israel from a condition of helpless misery and had betrothed it to Himself[1]. He had entered into a covenant with the nation, and had lifted it to greatness and renown; but Israel had repaid His love by ungrateful neglect of His commandments, by idolatry, and by the practice of heathen abominations[2]. Unlike Hosea or Jeremiah, Ezekiel denies that the nation was at any period of its past history true to Jahveh; even in Egypt and in the wilderness it had displayed its inherent tendency to rebellion[3]. On the other hand, he resembles the Deuteronomists in his unswerving conviction that Jahveh will yet bring His purpose of grace to accomplishment. He foretells the restoration of Israel to its own land, the renewal of the nation through the power of Jahveh's Spirit, and its future fulfilment of the moral conditions of Jahveh's covenant. That these conditions have a legalistic character is a peculiarity of Ezekiel's thought. In his eyes the holiness of God is outraged not less by ritual than by moral offences. At the same time Ezekiel seems to make a distinction between the 'statutes of life,'—the moral precepts of the decalogue,—and merely ritual ordinances. His hope for Israel's regeneration lies in the anticipated gift of *a new heart* and *a new spirit* by Jahveh Himself—an anticipation which he inherits from Jeremiah[4].

Jahveh and Israel.

Thus Ezekiel's teaching combines old with new elements. He conceives of Jahveh as inseparably bound to Israel. The honour of Jahveh's 'Name' is involved in the fortunes of the chosen people;

[1] Ezek. xvi. [2] Ezek. xvi., esp. 8, 20—22, 43.

[3] Ezek. xx. 8—24. Contrast Hos. ii. 15, xi. 1; Jer. ii. 2 foll.

[4] Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 26 foll. Cp. Jer. xxxii. 39, etc. As Davidson remarks, 'The background to this final picture of the people's condition [in chh. xl.—xlviii.] is formed by the whole great passage chh. xxxiii.—xxxvii. It is a people forgiven and sanctified and led by the Spirit of God which the prophet contemplates in ch. xl. *seq.* He does not inculcate morality, because he feels that morality is assured (xxxvi. 25—29).' *The Book of Ezekiel* (Camb. Bible), pp. 290, 291.

Israel's glory is to have Jahveh Himself dwelling in its midst and sanctifying the community by His presence. On the other hand, Jahveh can only be approached under certain technical restrictions. Nothing unclean can draw near to Him, and impurity can only be removed by acts of lustration and atonement. Thus Ezekiel enjoins a strict observance of the Sabbath, together with a rigid abstinence from the use of blood and from unclean food[1]. Moreover, in his final chapters (xl.—xlviii.) he draws up an elaborate program of polity and worship, evidently based on the idea that the State is a purely religious community, the chief duty of the 'prince' being that of providing suitable material for the people's offering[2], and the place of honour being accorded to the descendants of the Zadokite priesthood.

The promise of the Spirit.

2. Ezekiel teaches, not less distinctly than Jeremiah, a doctrine of Divine grace. If there is any prospect of Israel's becoming again the 'righteous' or 'holy nation' it was divinely intended to be, dwelling under the shadow of Jahveh's wings and fulfilling His requirement, the only hope of this consummation lies in the action of Jahveh Himself. He alone can *put a new spirit within* the hearts of His people; can *take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh*[3], enabling them to walk in His statutes and to live worthy of their vocation as a people of God. The promise of the Spirit, indeed, is a new note in prophecy, characteristic of the exilic period[4]. Even Jeremiah does not expressly indicate the agency by which

[1] Ezek. iv. 14, xviii. 6, 15 (perhaps reading הדם for החרים), xx. 12, xxii. 8, 26, xxiii. 38, xxxiii. 25, xliv. 23, 31.

[2] Ezek. xlvi. It is important to remember that the 'law of holiness' (Lev. xvii.—xxvi.) in its developed form apparently emanates from the circle of Ezekiel. See Montefiore's remarks, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 235 foll.

[3] Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 26.

[4] See Davidson on Ezek. xxxvi. 27. He observes that 'There always attaches to "Spirit" the idea of power in operation; the Spirit of God is God exerting power.'

Jahveh will write His law in the hearts of men and so bring His new covenant to accomplishment[1]. Thus Ezekiel's prediction gives a new form to Jeremiah's doctrine that only the power of Jahveh *Himself* can bring about the moral and spiritual renewal which is Israel's sorest need. It is consistent with the prophet's general point of view that the renewed life of the people displays itself in the observance of Jahveh's *statutes and judgments*[2], a phrase which does not exclude the moral laws to which Ezekiel so often refers, yet which certainly seems to imply a somewhat legalistic conception of holiness.

On the other hand, while Jeremiah prophesies of a *spiritual* religion, independent of Temple and ark[3], Ezekiel looks forward to the erection of a visible sanctuary as the centre of the nation's religious life. For him, the Deuteronomic Law of the one sanctuary involves no mere restriction of a corrupt practice, but a positive principle of true and acceptable worship. In fact he gives expression in the ideal sketch of chh. xl.—xlviii. to Israel's wistful regret for those sacred institutions which the nation had so lightly prized and now had apparently lost. In Ezekiel's eyes the very existence of religion is bound up with a careful and systematic organisation of worship—a worship in which each member of the holy community is bound to take his appointed part. It is this mode of conceiving religion which has earned for Ezekiel the title 'Father of Judaism.' If, as seems probable, he used his influence to encourage the work of compiling and codifying the ritual 'Law of Holiness[4]' and the usages embodied in the 'Priestly Code,'

[1] Jer. xxxi. 33. [2] Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

[3] Jer. iii. 16.

[4] Obs. the connection between the teaching of Ezekiel and the fundamental idea of the 'Law of Holiness,' namely, that sin is impurity and carries pollution to the land and community of Jahveh (Lev. xviii. 25, xx. 3, 7). The conception of holiness which pervades this collection of partly moral, partly ceremonial precepts seems not to belong to the original code, but to the exilic compiler. Some critics attribute the compilation to Ezekiel himself, but see Cornill, *Einleitung in das A.T.* § 13.

he doubtless acted upon the conviction that the great need of his people at this crisis of their history was the discipline of law.

Ezekiel's theodicy.

3. What then is Ezekiel's conception of God? Earlier prophets proclaimed that the vindication of Jahveh's holiness demanded the temporary rejection of the nation; Ezekiel argues that this very holiness renders the ultimate *restoration* of Israel inevitable. Jahveh will 'show Himself holy' in the redemption of His people and in the vindication of His honour. His 'Name' has been profaned among the heathen, who have judged Him to be unable to protect His people[1]. In fact, the honour of Jahveh's 'Name' is inseparably bound up with the destiny of Israel; the redemption of Israel is the goal of history, because through it the righteousness of Jahveh's rule will be triumphantly manifested. Thus to the leading ideas of earlier prophecy—the ideas of Jahveh's sovereignty, of His transcendence, of His omnipotent might, displayed in the election of Israel and in the control of history—to these Ezekiel adds traits which give distinctness to the idea of Jahveh's personality, and which imply His direct relationship to individual men[2]. All souls are His, and He requites them according to their deeds[3]. But the leading element in his conception of Jahveh is his frequent insistence upon the Divine 'honour.' The manifestation of Jahveh, the justification of His ways, the acknowledgement of His holiness and power—this is the aim of the redemptive movement. *I will magnify myself and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am Jahveh....And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they trespassed against me*[4]. The

[1] Ezek. xxxvi. 20.

[2] Consider the anthropomorphic language of i. 26, vii. 22, viii. 18, xiv. 8, xx. 33, xxxviii. 18, xliii. 7.

[3] Ezek. xviii. 4.

[4] Ezek. xxxviii. 23, xxxix. 23.

heathen will learn what Jahveh is, partly by actual experience of His judgments falling on themselves, partly by observation of His gracious dealings with Israel. The assaults of the heathen will culminate in the invasion of the land by the host of Gog—an event which is evidently supposed to occur *after* Israel's restoration to Palestine. The complete overthrow, however, of the armies of Gog has for its object the manifestation of Jahveh. *The heathen shall know that I am Jahveh, the Holy One in Israel*[1]. Thus Ezekiel prepares the way for the monotheistic polemic of Deutero-Isaiah. In calling Jahveh 'holy' he aims at exalting the sole Godhead and absolute sovereignty of Israel's God; in calling Him *the God of Israel* he gathers up in one pregnant phrase the thoughts (1) that Jahveh has lovingly made Himself known to Israel and linked Himself to its destinies; (2) that in the history of Israel His 'Name' is manifested—His *righteousness* in punishing His people's sins and His *grace* in restoring them through the agency of His Spirit; (3) that the way of hope for Israel lies in turning to Jahveh and in humbly looking to Him alone for the fulfilment of His revealed purpose. If this solicitude for Jahveh's honour appears 'one-sided[2],' we must remember that it springs from the very loftiness of Ezekiel's conception. He 'cannot conceive the motive of Jahveh's operations to be found anywhere but in Himself[3]':

> 'He can delight in nought
> Save only in Himself and what Himself hath wrought.'

It should be noticed, finally, that similar language is used even by Deutero-Isaiah, whose general tone stands in striking contrast to that of Ezekiel[4].

4. In his doctrine of the moral responsibility of individual souls, Ezekiel partly reproduces his own personal experience,

[1] Ezek. xxxix. 7; cp. xxxviii. 16, 23.
[2] Cp. Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 247, 248.
[3] Davidson, *The Book of Ezekiel*, p. xlii.
[4] See Isai. xlii. 8, xlv. 23, xlviii. 11.

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partly developes a truth already indicated by Jeremiah. The circumstances of the prophet's life had made him vividly conscious of his own relation to God, and had led him to ponder on the Divine dealings with individual men. In the calamity which had overwhelmed the nation even righteous persons were involved. What was the explanation of a judgment which had overtaken innocent and guilty alike[1]? Many of the exiles complained that they suffered for their fathers' sins, but Ezekiel on the contrary declares that *the soul that sinneth it shall die*[2]. Jeremiah had predicted a time when each individual should have direct access to Jahveh. The clinging burden of sin and defilement should be removed; the law of Jahveh should be written in the hearts of all: *for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jahveh*[3]. It remained for Ezekiel to emphasise both elements in his predecessor's teaching; to proclaim the means by which individual hearts should be renewed[4], and to correct one-sided and narrow views of Divine retribution. It is true that in answering the complaint, *the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge*, Ezekiel seems to ignore the past. He is content to deliver Jahveh's message for the present, namely, that *the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son*, and that there is a place for repentance: the wicked may, if he will, *turn from his way and live*[5]. Ezekiel does not consistently develope his own doctrine, but in any case it marks a great step in advance—a step in the direction of personal religion and of clearer views respecting man's relation to God. The work of the prophets may indeed be said to find its consummation in the thought that religion is an inward thing, and that the gift of the Spirit—hitherto regarded as peculiar to the prophets them-

Individual responsibility.

[1] Ezek. xxi. 4. Cp. xviii. 2.
[2] Ezek. xviii. 4, 20.
[3] Jer. xxxi. 34.
[4] Ezek. xxxvi. 25 foll.
[5] Ezek. xviii. 21, xxxiii. 11.

selves—may become the personal possession of each faithful Israelite.

Ezekiel's program of worship (chh. xl.—xlviii.).

5. It remains to discuss very briefly the concluding section of Ezekiel's book (chh. xl.—xlviii.), a passage which indicates very clearly the direction in which the spirit of Judaism was destined to advance. These chapters embody the Messianic ideal of the priesthood: a future in which the community will have Jahveh dwelling in its very midst[1], and 'holiness,' regulating every detail of life, will be the central feature of Israel's polity. Ezekiel's program is no doubt idealistic, but in part it rests upon ancient priestly usage, and it is important as formulating the principles which unquestionably influenced the generation that witnessed the close of the exile. The reconstruction of Israel's social and religious life did as a matter of fact follow the lines which Ezekiel foreshadowed, even though his program was not adopted by the new community in its entirety[2]. We may, however, detect the subsequent influence of Ezekiel partly in the national zeal for the erection of the Temple, partly in the rigid distinction instituted between the priests and the Levites[3], chiefly perhaps in the fact that sacrifice after the exile was not, as of old, the spontaneous service of individuals or families, but became an official and representative act of national worship.

Ezekiel's leading idea.

Ezekiel in fact lays special stress upon a religious *idea*, which certainly underlies the sacrificial system in its developed form (P)—the idea that Israel is a 'holy' people in whose midst the God of holiness Himself deigns to make His dwelling. The whole

[1] Ezek. xlviii. 35.

[2] Cp. Robertson Smith, *O.T. in J. C.* 374 foll., and Additional Note F (pp. 442 foll.).

[3] Cp. Neh. vii. 39 foll.; Ezek. xliv. Obs. Ezekiel distinguishes between the hereditary Zadokite priesthood attached to the Temple and the other Levitical priests who had formerly been attached to the high places. These last are reduced to a menial *status* (10, 11).

mass of minute regulations in chh. xl.—xlviii. is intended to safeguard the Divine 'holiness,' which had been so constantly outraged by the popular religion of pre-exilic times. Ezekiel is at once a prophet and a priest, sharing with the former prophets the conviction that Jahveh is a moral ruler who demands social and personal righteousness; while with the priesthood he regards the *cultus* as the surest safeguard against the idolatry which had been Israel's besetting sin in the past. But it is only by ignoring important parts of Ezekiel's teaching that we can represent him as making a correct ritual 'the main and most important element in religion[1].' The utmost that can be fairly maintained is that he conceives Jahveh's moral requirement somewhat in legal fashion as a system of 'statutes and judgments,' but he nowhere substitutes a ceremonial system for obedience to *the statutes of life*[2]. In his sketch of the ideal sanctuary of the future, a great moral change in the people, brought about by the Spirit of Jahveh, is presupposed. The nation, in whose midst Jahveh deigns to dwell, is a nation prepared for His indwelling by a thorough regeneration of heart and life. Jahveh is a King reigning in the midst of His people, and justly requiring holiness in those who approach Him. This holiness indeed finds its outward expression in a system of lustration and of atoning sacrifice. Jahveh's land and dwelling-place are protected from pollution by the removal of all possible causes of Levitical defilement; even the tombs of the kings are to be excluded from the sacred precinct[3]. But Ezekiel's conception of holiness is rooted in a profound conviction of the evil of sin, and in a keen sense of the necessity of personal faith and repentance for acceptance with God.

[1] Smend ap. Montefiore, p. 254.

[2] Ezek. xxxiii. 15. In xviii. 5—9 we have a kind of prophetic summary of Jahveh's moral requirement, in which ritual obligations are intermingled with ethical duties. Ezekiel in fact regards the worship of Jahveh at the high places, and the use of images connected with it, as simply idolatrous.

[3] Ezek. xliii. 7—9.

Literary activity during the exile.

The influence of Ezekiel extended far beyond the immediate sphere of his work as prophet and pastor of souls. It is practically certain that he did much to foster the literary activity which was characteristic of the exile. The study of their sacred literature served to compensate the Jews for the loss of their city and Temple; and the book of Deuteronomy, which gathered up and brought to a focus the teaching of the pre-exilic prophets, furnished the point of view and the motive with which various schools of writers and compilers pursued their task.

During the exile the historical annals of the nation, the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, seem to have been systematically collected, revised, and edited in a permanent form[1]. This work was carried on by religious men who looked at the past history of the nation in the light of the leading ideas of Deuteronomy. Regarded as a whole, their work forms a theodicy. The calamities of Israel are attributed to the non-observance by particular kings of the Deuteronomic Law of the one sanctuary. The career of each monarch is judged by the standard of his conformity to this law. According to these historians, a false worship of Jahveh and an idolatrous devotion to alien deities had been Israel's cardinal sin from the first; and the retribution which had finally overtaken the nation had been the inevitable result of the policy of men like Jeroboam I and Manasseh—a result which the zeal and piety of reformers like Josiah could not avert.

The growth of this historical work is obscure, and its details are unimportant for our present purpose. All that needs to be noticed here is its general character and point of view. The

[1] Montefiore (*Hibbert Lectures*, p. 232) points out that 'These books did not indeed escape further additions and interpretations in the post-exilic period; but their main character, the framework in which the facts are arranged, and the uniform lesson they are made to teach, were the product of the periods immediately before, and either during, or soon after the exile.'

scope of the history was apparently enlarged so as to embrace the pre-monarchic period from the conquest of Canaan. A uniform standard of judgment was adopted throughout the books, namely, faithfulness or unfaithfulness to essential principles of the religion of Jahveh Hence the pessimistic tone of the compilers. Scarcely a single monarch had even attempted to satisfy the requirement of the Deuteronomic Law; Israel's history appeared to have been one long and continuous declension from a higher and purer standard of faith and worship. The historians are mainly concerned to point the moral of the history, and this didactic treatment of the national annals, this tendency to judge events from a particular religious standpoint and to draw from them a single lesson, culminates about three centuries later in the work of the Chronicler.

The 'Priestly Code.'

Meanwhile a sacerdotal school of *literati* was devoting itself to the codification of the rules and traditions of the priestly order. The so-called 'Law of Holiness' (Lev. xvii.—xxvi.) was probably the first product of their labours, and apparently somewhat later was compiled that elaborate exposition of Israel's ancient institutions and laws which is usually called the 'Priestly Code.' The Law of Holiness, as has been already noticed, contains elements which may be traced to Ezekiel's influence and to that of other existing codes (Deuteronomy and the 'Book of the Covenant'). The compilation of the 'Priestly Code' should probably be assigned to the period between Ezekiel's death (*c.* 572) and the visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem (444). Like the 'Law of Holiness,' the code as a whole is based on the fundamental idea that Israel is a holy community or 'congregation' (*'edah*), having in its midst the sanctuary of Jahveh. The main bulk of the code consists of purely legal matter, the historical narrative being strictly subordinate to the legal purpose of the whole document. The compilers develope systematically the line of thought to which Ezekiel had given so powerful an impulse, but we may perhaps also discern in their work some effect of

Jewish contact with Babylonian culture[1]. The 'Priestly Code' in fact represents that theory of Israel's history and institutions which grew up during the exile, a theory evidently current in priestly circles. Hence the space devoted to the history of the tabernacle, its structure, furniture, and ceremonial. The narrative viewed in its entirety is an ideal picture of the past, parallel to Ezekiel's ideal sketch of the future. It is based on the conception that Israel is not so much a nation as a church.

The work of Deutero-Isaiah.

The hope of ultimate restoration to Palestine was kept alive among the exiles by the predictions of Jeremiah and the preaching of Ezekiel; as a practical possibility it presented itself about 20 years after Ezekiel's death, at the moment when Cyrus of Persia entered on his extraordinary career of conquest. For the historian of religion the triumphant advance of Cyrus into Western Asia is chiefly noteworthy as having occasioned the ministry of the great prophet whose writings are incorporated with those of Isaiah. This unnamed comforter of Israel differs from the older prophets in the general tenour of his message. He begins where they left off. It was their task to proclaim the judgments of God impending over a guilty nation. He opens with the word of consolation, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.* It was natural that the grateful Jews of a later time should include the writings of Israel's unknown consoler in the book of the great eighth-century prophet whose name means 'Jahveh's salvation.' His message played a vital part in the enlargement of Israel's mental horizon and in the expansion of its creed into a world-embracing faith[2].

[1] *e.g.* in the tendency of the compilers to insist on the antiquity of Hebrew religion; also in their minute chronology and in their use of certain Babylonian legends in the story of the origins. See *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, *s.v.* 'Historical Literature,' § 9.

[2] The exact compass of the book is a matter of much controversy. There is a general measure of agreement in regarding chh. xl.—lv. as the authentic work of Israel's unknown comforter. Chh. lvi.—lxvi. seem to be clearly post-exilic.

His teaching.

What is distinctive in Deutero-Isaiah's teaching may be described in a few words. It is his mission to proclaim Jahveh to Israel as the living Saviour of the helpless and oppressed. He conceives in a manner peculiar to himself the method, the motive, and the object of the impending deliverance.

1. As regards the *method* of Israel's release from captivity, the prophet enlarges on its strangeness, its sudden and complete interruption of what might seem the fixed and inevitable course of destiny. He claims for Jahveh the freedom, the power of initiation, which is proper to omnipotent personality. This is the explanation of the very anthropomorphic language in which Jahveh's action is depicted. He shouts, He utters a battle-cry like a man of war, He cries aloud like a travailing woman[1]. This again is the point of that vigorous and scornful polemic against idols and their votaries which is characteristic of the book[2]. Jahveh alone is the author and lord of creation, the *living God*, speaking, acting, controlling the development of events, predicting things to come, bringing what He has foretold to accomplishment. He alone can raise up fitting agents to execute His will; His power and purpose lie behind that incalculable force of human individuality which from time to time changes the course of history. Cyrus, for instance, is Jahveh's servant. For Israel's sake the heathen warrior is equipped for war and crowned with victory[3].

We may well marvel at the originality and the breadth of view implied in this conception of the Persian warrior. The exiles doubtless hoped and believed that the promised deliverer would proceed *from the midst of them*[4], would be a hero of their own race—a scion, probably, of David's house. But Jahveh's thoughts were not their thoughts. A heathen prince, at whose religious creed we can but dimly guess, was to be entrusted with the deliverance of Jahveh's people. Thus even

[1] Isai. xlii. 13, 14.
[2] Isai. xli. 6, xliv. 10 foll.
[3] Isai. xliv. 28—xlv. 7; xlvi. 11.
[4] Jer. xxx. 21.

the despised Gentiles were to bear an unconscious but conspicuous part in the advancement of the Divine kingdom. Thus would be unmistakeably manifested the action of Jahveh Himself, executing in His own fashion and through an instrument of His own choice His everlasting purpose of grace. *The Lord Jahveh*, cried the prophet, *will come as a mighty one, and His arm shall rule for Him*[1].

2. In describing the *motive* which impels Jahveh to accomplish Israel's deliverance, the prophet makes a certain advance upon his predecessor. Ezekiel had taught that Jahveh's display of grace towards His people was a necessary vindication of His outraged honour. His 'Name' was to be made known in the chastisement of Israel's sin, in the downfall of its oppressors, and in the restoration of the nation to its own land. So would the heathen learn that Israel's God was Jahveh[2]. Deutero-Isaiah does not altogether abandon this point of view[3], but his dominant thought is that Jahveh's goodness to Israel is the outcome of His everlasting love for the people of His choice[4]. Jahveh is the 'Holy One of Israel,' not merely as the transcendent and exclusive object of His people's worship[5], but as the God who makes Himself known to the nations in and through Israel.

3. Love, then, was the motive of Jahveh's action, but this love was no aimless tenderness, no capricious partiality. It had great and far-reaching purposes for its object. What was the providential *aim* and *purpose* of Israel's redemption? The teaching of Deutero-Isaiah in regard to this point far transcends that of the pre-exilic prophets. Amos represents Jahveh as the righteous judge of the nations, but the exilic prophet invites the ends of the world to look unto Jahveh and

[1] Isai. xl. 10. [2] Ezek. xxxvi. 22, 23. [3] See above, p. 115.

[4] Isai. xliii. 3, 4, xlix. 15. Cp. liv. 5.

[5] The phrase is common to the later with the earlier Isaiah. Obs. that in Deutero-Isaiah, for 'Holy One of Israel' is occasionally substituted simply קדוש 'Holy One' (*e.g.* in xl. 25).

be saved[1]. By a doctrine peculiar to himself—that of the ministry of Jahveh's suffering servant—the prophet crowns all the universalistic tendencies of earlier prophecy. He represents the God of Israel as the gracious King and Saviour of the heathen world, manifesting Himself in that capacity through Israel His chosen servant, who is charged with a mission to all mankind.

Doctrine of Jahveh's 'servant.'

The name 'servant of Jahveh' as applied to Israel implies a unique relation to God and a unique vocation. It sets forth at once the fact of the nation's election and the purpose which its deliverance from exile was designed to serve. Ideally the name belonged by right to Israel in its totality, but the actual Israel of the exile had utterly failed to rise to the height of its vocation; the nation itself stood in need of conversion and illumination[2]. Strictly considered, the name 'servant of Jahveh' could only be applied to the *Israel of God*—to that small remnant of the faithful who in dark days of adversity and reproach clung to the hopes and responsibilities which Israel as a nation had forgotten or forfeited. To this ideal Israel—this 'true, effective Israel'—the exhortations and promises of Deutero-Isaiah are addressed. In the servant's task is included, first, the conversion of the chosen nation itself[3]. The zealous and faithful few are to leaven the mass and to kindle in their dull hearts some sense of the splendour and sublimity of their calling. The regeneration of Israel itself, however, is only a step towards the conversion of the heathen world. The ultimate mission of the servant is to be *a light to the Gentiles*, and to be Jahveh's *salvation unto the end of the earth*[4].

But the vocation of the servant can only be fulfilled through humiliation and suffering. In the fifty-third chapter the prophet seems to concentrate in an individual figure the characteristics of the ideal Israel—its faithfulness, its constancy, its zeal

[1] Isai. xlv. 22.
[2] Isai. xlii. 19, xliii. 25.
[3] Isai. xlix. 3 foll.
[4] Isai. xlix. 6; cp. xlii. 5—7.

for Jahveh's honour. He complains of the incredulity with which the servant is received by the chosen nation. He comes to his own and they receive him not: *he is despised and rejected of men*, and finally perishes by a violent death. But the issue of these sufferings is the triumphant accomplishment of Jahveh's purpose. Through death the servant passes to a life of fruitfulness and power in which *he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.* His sufferings will be found to have atoning virtue; they will be accepted in satisfaction for the sins of the nation; they will move Israel itself to penitent confession of its past blindness; by the way of sorrows its mission will be fulfilled; the redeemer of Israel will be acknowledged as the Saviour of the world[1].

Origin of the conception.

Doubtless this great conception of the suffering servant arose as the result of the circumstances in which Israel was now placed. The fortunes of the nation were no longer bound up as heretofore with those of the monarchy, and the sifting process of national misfortune tended to produce a sharp severance between the mass of the people, negligent of its ideal vocation, and the faithful nucleus which in the school of adversity had learned the true significance of Israel's election and the tendency and drift of its history. It is quite possible too that this wonderful creation was to some extent suggested by the personal experience of Jeremiah, who in utter isolation had tenaciously clung to his faith in Jahveh, and had crowned a life of persecution and contumely by a martyr's death. In any case the religious effect of Deutero-Isaiah's conception was the enrichment of Israel's theology by a new and more profound doctrine as to the meaning of suffering, and by the presentation of an ideal which is in the strict sense of the term universalistic. The ancient prophetic doctrine of Israel's election and pre-eminent dignity as

[1] See Delitzsch on Isai. xlii. 1; Driver's *Isaiah, his life and times*, pp. 175 foll.

the 'people of revelation' is not abandoned but is combined with a faith which developes and illuminates it. Israel learned in exile that the advance of God's kingdom on earth depended on the submission of Jahveh's righteous servant to unmerited suffering. It learned that Israel's peculiar privileges were bestowed with a view to the welfare of mankind. It learned that Israel was chosen by Jahveh, not for its own sake but for the glory of God, to proclaim His 'Name,' and to set forth His praise to the ends of the earth[1].

[1] Isai. xli. 8, xlii. 4, 6.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BEGINNINGS OF JUDAISM.

The uncertainty which surrounds the circumstances of Israel's restoration from exile does not seriously affect our view of the general course of religious history. Whether the main body of the exiles returned immediately after the accession of Cyrus, as the narrative contained in the book of Ezra suggests, or at the opening of the reign of Darius Hystaspis (522), or on the occasion of Ezra's mission to Jerusalem (458), in any case a new Israel, with new ideals, from henceforth engages our attention.

The return from exile.

It is not possible to trace with certainty the chequered history of the community during this period. The earliest movement, whatever may have been its scale, does not seem to have been very successful. Possibly the more patriotic among the exiles were slow to recognise the changed conditions in which the restored Jewish community found itself. Their hopes were still set upon a revival of the monarchy which had played so conspicuous a part in the history of Israel's religion. The force of circumstances, however, had replaced the ancient monarchy by a hierarchy. The house of David had indeed its surviving representative in Zerubbabel, but he never occupied a position of commanding importance, and any hopes that may have been

connected with his person by prophets[1], or patriots, were doomed to disappointment. Israel was now no longer a State but a religious community, and the representative of its holiness was the 'High Priest[2].' This official name was apparently first assumed by Joshua ben Josedech, and the new title both indicated the enhanced dignity of the priestly office and pointed to an augmentation of its authority in the future. The 'High Priest' was virtually the head and representative of the new Israel, and held the chief place in a hierarchy which included priests, Levites, and Temple-servants. In the work of administration the High Priest was probably assisted by the elders or 'nobles,' that is, by hereditary representatives of the Jewish families settled in Jerusalem.

Rebuilding of the Temple.

Some twenty years elapsed after the restoration before the attempt to reconstruct the Temple was made in earnest. The completion of the building in 516 marks a new departure in religious history. It was the first and most definite step towards the realisation of Ezekiel's vision of a holy community, having the sanctuary as its visible centre and rallying-point. It was even hailed by Haggai as the inauguration of the Messianic age, in which the ideals of prophecy would be presently fulfilled—the overthrow of the heathen kingdoms, the recognition by the Gentiles of the true God, and the consecration of their substance to the service of Jahveh[3].

The restoration of the Temple was followed by a period of

[1] Hag. ii. 23; Zech. iii. 8, vi. 9 foll. That Haggai connected the advent of the Messianic age with Zerubbabel is an instance of the inevitable limitations of prophecy. But he at least succeeded, as Prof. G. A. Smith says (*Twelve Prophets*, II. 252), in 'asserting the Messianic hope of Israel... in this reopening of her life.'

[2] There is no mention of a 'High Priest' in Ezekiel. The pre-exilic title was probably 'the priest' (2 Kings xi. 9) or 'head-priest' (2 Kings xxv. 18). 'High priest' is the title used by Haggai, Zechariah, and P (Lev. xxi. 10). P also uses the phrase 'anointed priest' (Lev. iv. 3, 5; cp. viii. 12).

[3] Hag. ii. 7, 22.

reaction and disillusionment. The enthusiasm which had been kindled by the glowing language of prophecy died down. Zeal for the Law and faith in the imminent fulfilment of Messianic ideals sustained the hearts of the few who *trembled at the words of the God of Israel*[1]. But the mass of the returned exiles were unable to withstand the strain of disappointment. Jerusalem was an insignificant and half-ruined city, surrounded by enemies who were embittered by the exclusiveness of the new community. The soil of Judaea yielded but a scanty and precarious subsistence; the economic and social evils which prophets had formerly denounced again made their appearance. Many of the Jews were driven by the contrast between their religious ideals and their actual position into despair or indifference, and before the first visit of Ezra, sixty years later, the hopes with which men had hailed the restoration of the community to Palestine seemed to be finally quenched.

The failure of hopes.

The next epoch of importance is connected with the names of Ezra and Nehemiah (445), the representatives of that zeal for the Law which was now the strongest influence at work within the Jewish community. In comparison with these even the High Priest sank into insignificance. As governor of Jerusalem Nehemiah waged war with the opponents of the Law within and without the city. By the reconstruction of the walls, to which he first devoted his energies, he succeeded in breaking the connection between the semi-heathen *people of the land* and the disaffected element within the city; and he thus paved the way for Ezra's reconstitution of the community on the basis of the Law[2]. It was only by the most strenuous efforts, or rather by the sheer weight of his personal authority, that this result was brought

Ezra and Nehemiah.

[1] Ezra ix. 4.

[2] By some scholars (*e.g.* Prof. H. Guthe in *Enc. Bib.*) the reappearance of Ezra is connected with Nehemiah's *second* visit. On this view the publication of the Law-book took place about 432 or 431.

about. The chief ordinances which the community pledged itself to observe are recorded in Nehemiah x. 28 foll. They included (1) a rigid abstention from intermarriage with 'the people of the land'; (2) a strict observance of the Sabbath and of the sabbatical year; (3) the obligation to provide for the sustenance of the priesthood by punctual payment of certain dues and offerings. The maintenance of the sanctuary was in fact the principal duty with which the community charged itself. *We will not forsake*, they declared, *the house of our God*. In conjunction, then, with Ezra, Nehemiah renewed the covenant which bound Israel to Jahveh. The completed Law-book, which had been compiled in Babylon and was afterwards expanded into our present Pentateuch, was now promulgated and accepted by the people as the basis on which its social and religious life was to be organised. 'Israel could henceforth exist only as the community of the Law, and on the fulfilment of the Law depended its future[1].'

Our first object in this chapter will be to give some idea of the position in which the Jewish community was placed as the result of Ezra's work.

The Jews now formed an exclusively religious body or 'congregation.' Members of the priestly order were very numerous in proportion to the total number of those who returned from Babylon. All ideas of political independence were soon perceived to be absolutely impracticable; indeed, as Ezra bitterly complained, the community planted in the land which Jahveh had given to their forefathers found itself in subjection to the heathen[2]. The fundamental principle of Ezra's reformation was that of Ezekiel's ideal program: *a holy people in a holy land*. 'Holiness' was to be secured by careful avoidance of intermarriage with aliens—by absolute separation from the taint of heathenism. This involved the exclusion from the congregation, not merely of foreigners

[1] Smend, 347.

[2] Ezra ix. 7 foll.

(*e.g.* the 'Ammonites,' 'Arabians,' 'Ashdodites,' mentioned in Nehemiah iv. 7), but of the semi-heathen descendants of those Israelites who had remained in Palestine during the exile, and with whom even prominent members of the community in Jerusalem had intermarried. These mixed marriages, by which *the holy seed*[1] had *mingled themselves with the people of the land*, were the cause of a sharp conflict between the reformers and the influential classes in Jerusalem. Ultimately Nehemiah banished from the city a grandson of the High Priest Eliashib, who refused to put away his wife[2], the consequence of this step being the foundation of a schismatic community in Samaria[3]. Zeal for the Law thus gained an apparent, but not a lasting triumph. At a later time the laity were allowed under certain restrictions to marry foreign wives; this license, however, was never extended to the priesthood.

Israel in fact now formed a church rather than a nation, and the worship of the Temple became an official or representative ceremony, serving to unite all members of the Jewish community in a close religious fellowship. The Temple and the Law were the two possessions which Israel guarded with jealous care, and just as the proper service of the Temple demanded an elaborately organised hierarchy, so the conception of the Law as the final embodiment of Jahveh's requirement led to the rise of an important class of teachers (the Scribes), and also to the foundation of Synagogues, which were probably in the first instance places of instruction rather than of worship. The reading and exposition of the Law gradually became the most important feature in the religious system of Judaism. Thus the legalistic movement which began with the publication of Deuteronomy in the seventh century found its climax in a system which made the Law supreme and Judaism the religion of a book.

[1] זרע הקדש, Ezra ix. 2.
[2] Neh. xiii. 28.
[3] Josephus, *Antiq.* XI. 8.

1. *The holiness of Israel.*

The chief duty of the Jewish community at Jerusalem was the worship of God. Its main concern was to guard against every form of impurity that might be an offence to Jahveh, who deigned to dwell in the midst of His people. Accordingly the principal features of the 'Priestly Code' are two: its system of atonement for sin, and its system of purification. 'Holiness' was in fact something outward and physical as well as inward and spiritual. A breach of purity—even some involuntary defilement—ranked as sin. Indeed, the Priestly Code is more concerned with involuntary than with voluntary offences[1]; and the nearer any person or order stood to the central sanctuary, the higher was the degree of 'holiness' exacted[2]. An elaborate system was devised to remove from the 'congregation' all causes of defilement inconsistent with Jahveh's presence in the sanctuary.

Thus the conception of holiness implied in the ordinances of P clearly retains something of its primitive associations; and though the word 'holy' has been 'partially moralised[3]' through the influence of the prophets, it nevertheless approximates in the Levitical system to the sense of 'free from physical defilement.' Even the 'holiness' of God means 'that separation from impurity which belongs to His nature and is to be reproduced and exhibited in the life of His people[4].' *Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.* The sanctuary is the central shrine of this holiness, as being the actual dwelling-place of Jahveh.

[1] Obs. the tendency in P to coordinate ritual with moral offences. The same penalty is assigned to both. Thus Sabbath-breaking, equally with murder, is to be punished by stoning (Ex. xxxi. 15, xxxv. 2; Num. xv. 35; cp. Num. xxxv. 31); and purification from *sin* is required even after physical defilement, *e.g.* contact with a corpse (Num. xix. 12 foll.).

[2] See, for instance, the rules relating to the ministry of the priests in Levit. xxi.

[3] Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 325.

[4] *DB*, *s.v.* 'Holiness.' Cp. Levit. xi. 44, xix. 2, xx. 7, 26, xxi. 8.

Hence P describes even the primitive 'tent' of the wilderness as having stood in the *midst* of the camp[1], the priests being stationed round about it, and, at a distance more or less remote, the various tribes. Admission to the sanctuary depends upon ritual purity, and hence it follows that one class of men is regarded as 'nearer' to God than another, and that approach to God can only be gained through the mediation of an official class or order.

Circumcision.

The sign of membership in the holy community was *circumcision.* Thus a new significance was attached to a rite which had comparatively little religious importance before the exile[2]. The age of circumcision was fixed at eight days, in order that the child might be 'dedicated as early as possible to the God who was to be its protector through life[3].' Circumcision was required even of aliens, as a condition of their taking part in the great religious festivals[4]. On the other hand, a circumcised person forfeited all rights and incurred the penalty of death by any open breach of his covenant-obligations (*e.g.* blasphemy, or profanation of the Sabbath[5]). For minor ritual offences he incurred the threat of being 'cut off' from Israel—a sentence which, while it implied that even ritual offences deserved death, yet left open the possibility of some milder penalty, such as excommunication, being inflicted[6].

[1] Contrast Ex. xxxiii. 7—11 and Num. xi. 24—26 (J).

[2] Jeremiah seems to depreciate circumcision in such passages as iv. 4, vi. 10, and ix. 25. Cp. Levit. xxvi. 41. By contrasting the fleshly rite with circumcision of 'heart' and 'ears,' the prophets gave an impulse to the later symbolical interpretation of the rite. Cp. Driver on *Genesis*, p. 190.

[3] Driver, *l.c.*

[4] Ex. xii. 44, 48 (P).

[5] Levit. xxiv. 10 foll.; Num. xv. 32 foll.

[6] Cp. Gen. xvii. 14 (neglecting circumcision), Levit. vii. 27 (eating blood), xvii. 9 (irregularity in offering a sacrifice), xxiii. 29 (neglecting the fast of the day of atonement), Num. ix. 13 (non-observance of the passover). See also Exod. xii. 19, xxx. 33; Num. xix. 13, 20, etc.

Rites of purification.

The maintenance of the covenant-relationship between God and Israel, and the renewal of it when broken, were the object of that elaborate system of purification which is a peculiar feature of the Priestly Code. Ritual defilement might arise from various causes, *e.g.* the eating of 'unclean' food, contact with leprosy or a dead body, besides various natural processes or accidents, such as childbirth and other purely physical functions[1]. All species of 'uncleanness' disqualified a person for approach to God. The unclean person was *ipso facto* excluded from the holy community till he was purged by lustration and sacrifice. The Levitical ordinances of purification are to be regarded as survivals from a circle of ideas which were characteristic of the primitive religion of the Semites and indeed of the crudest forms of pre-historic heathenism. The retention and systematisation in P of what is best described by the word *taboo*, is connected with the notion that things or processes which man regards with aversion or disgust are also offensive to the Deity. It is obvious, however, that such 'externalisation of holiness' is not strictly consistent with the genius of a spiritual religion[2].

The priesthood.

The requirement of 'holiness' naturally finds its climax in regulations concerning the priesthood. The obscure word *kohen* may possibly mean 'servant,' 'one who stands before a superior.' It is the special privilege of the Levitical priest that he 'stands before' Jahveh[3]; accordingly he must be without blemish[4]. He is restricted in regard to his choice of a wife, and is not suffered to *defile himself for the dead*, except in the case of very near kindred. If unclean from any cause, the priest must *separate himself*

[1] Levit. chh. xi.—xv.

[2] Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 329. On the origin and *rationale* of laws of taboo and uncleanness see W. Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, esp. the last lecture. See also the article 'Unclean, Uncleanness,' by A. S. Peake in Hastings' *DB*.

[3] So Baudissin in *DB*, IV. p. 67. [4] Levit. xxi. 16 foll.

from contact with holy things[1]. Thus the different grades of purity corresponded to the position and functions of different classes of persons. In the case of the Levites no higher degree of purity was exacted than in that of ordinary laymen, since the Levites were virtually the representatives of the laity, 'given to God' for the service of the sanctuary[2]. On the other hand, the requirement in the case of the High Priest was even more strict than in that of the rank and file of the priesthood[3].

Priests and Levites.

The holiness of Israel, as has been already implied, culminated in the holiness of the priests. The community had its official hierarchy, the organisation of which is fully described in the Priestly Code. In Deuteronomy there is apparently no distinction between priests and Levites; the usual phrase employed in the book is 'the priests the Levites,' or 'the Levite priests.' The original connection of the priesthood with the tribe of Levi is a matter of great obscurity. It has been suggested that 'Levite' was once the official term for a priest[4]. The link between Deuteronomy and the Priestly Code is furnished by Ezekiel, who in ch. xliv. directs that those Levites who had officiated at the ancient high places should be excluded from the priesthood, and serve only as inferior ministers or assistants to the regular priesthood (*i.e.* the descendants of Zadok) at Jerusalem[5]. In P, however, the distinction between priests and Levites is traced back to the time of Moses, and it is further accentuated than in the program of Ezekiel. The hierarchy of P includes three grades of ministers. In the lowest rank stood the *Levites* or Temple-servitors, 'given[6]' to the priests (or 'to Jahveh')

[1] Levit. xxii. 2.

[2] Num. iii. 9, xviii. 6.

[3] Levit. xxi. 10 foll.

[4] Thus Aaron is called 'the Levite' Ex. iv. 14. Baudissin (in *DB*, *s.v.* 'Priests and Levites') suggests that in Num. xviii. 2, 4 we have an explanation of the word, *lewi* being connected with *lawah* 'to attach oneself.' But this seems unsatisfactory. See also McNeile, *Exodus*, pp. lxvi and 26.

[5] Ezek. xliv. 10—17.

[6] *nethûnim*, Num. iii. 9. The word *nethînim* in Ezra and Nehemiah

for the service of the sanctuary. Their duties were the slaughter of sacrificial victims, washing of the parts to be consumed on the altar, the care of the sanctuary, and the bearing of the ark and other sacred furniture when carefully covered by the priests.

Above the Levites ranked the *priests*, the descendants of Zadok[1]. Their functions were henceforth (after the exile) almost exclusively ritual and ceremonial. They alone had the right of entry into the 'holy place'; on them devolved the duty of actually presenting the sacrifices, the sprinkling of the sacrificial blood, the offering of incense, the care of the lamp and the table of shewbread. They also discharged certain public and quasi-judicial functions, *e.g.* the pronouncing of persons clean or unclean[2], but otherwise the ancient duty of giving *torah* practically passed away from the priesthood, now that the Law existed in a systematic and codified form. Above the priests stood the 'High' or 'Great Priest,' sometimes called 'the Anointed Priest[3].' In him culminated the 'holiness' of the community. To him alone belonged the right of entry into the 'Holy of holies.' While the simple dress of the ordinary priest was emblematic of the purity that befitted his office, the vesture of the High Priest shone with the splendour of one who was glorified, as it were, by his peculiar nearness to Deity. He stood 'above the people' as their representative *in things pertaining to God*, and as the organ and instrument of the

denotes *foreign* Temple-servants. Obs. the position of the Levites is not regarded by P as due to any fault, but as an original arrangement of Moses. Contrast Ezek. xliv. 10 foll.

[1] P identifies the 'sons of Zadok' with the 'sons of Aaron' in order perhaps to admit other descendants of Aaron to priestly rights.

[2] Cp. Ezek. xliv. 23; Lev. x. 10, 11.

[3] See p. 128, note 2. The phrase 'High Priest' occurs first in Hag. i. 14; Zech. iii. 8. It is noteworthy that Ezekiel in his ideal program does not seem to contemplate a spiritual head of the hierarchy. The 'prince' of Ezek. xlv., xlvi. is clearly the *political* representative of the nation, and has no sacerdotal functions assigned him.

heavenly King. His office gained additional dignity and prestige from the fact that it was held for life and was hereditary.

The religious organisation of Israel, thus briefly described, closely corresponded to the fundamental thought of a theocracy. Jahveh Himself was looked upon as the ruler and guardian of the holy people, exercising His sovereignty and declaring His will through the mediation of the priesthood. The community on its side fulfilled its covenant-obligations and maintained its covenant-*status* partly by the system of sacrifice, partly by strict observance of the laws regulating ceremonial purity. The community approached God through its official representatives. The Priestly Code does not conceive the relation of the individual to Jahveh as immediate. The individual Israelite only approaches God, is only accepted by Him, as a member of a community, from which, by neglect of the prescribed conditions, he cuts himself off.

2. *Worship.*

By far the largest part of the Priestly Code is devoted to the regulation of the *cultus*. Sacrifice was henceforth the appointed means by which Israel was to realise its special privileges as a people admitted to communion with the Most High. In the pre-exilic period the most frequent offerings were those which were accompanied by a sacred meal. In fact the slaughter of animals for food was a religious act, and the necessary preliminary for a social feast; accordingly, sacrifices were usually offered at the three yearly festivals. The effect of the Deuteronomic reformation had been to secularise the slaughter of animals, since the new code prohibited the offering of sacrifice elsewhere than at the central sanctuary. This last provision was of course a conspicuous and indispensable feature of the restored ritual. The main concern of the Priestly Code is no longer with sacrifice regarded as the free-will offering of an individual or a clan, but with sacrifice in its national aspect as

the solemn public service of a consecrated community. In pre-exilic times the Temple had been to a great extent the shrine not of the nation, but of the capital, or, to speak more strictly, of the reigning monarch[1]. But in the age of the restoration, the Temple became the centre of the national life, and henceforth the chief function of Israel, now organised as a religious community, was sacrificial worship. That which in the eyes of the prophets was relatively unimportant in comparison with moral obedience, now became the outward symbol and expression of Israel's obedience to the divine Law.

On a general survey of the law of sacrifice[2], we notice that the ancient observances connected with it are for the most part remodelled and re-enforced. Certain heathen elements which had gradually found their way into the ritual were either abolished or invested with new significance. The forms of worship in old Israel had varied in different localities. The newly regulated *cultus* was comparatively speaking simple and uniform. Admitting of no variations, it was well calculated to serve as an object-lesson to Israel; it suggested the spiritual truths which underlay a divinely-regulated system. *Nihil enim vacuum neque sine signo apud Deum*[3]. The traditional materials of sacrifice remained unaltered: the flesh of calves, goats, sheep, lambs, pigeons and doves; the chief products of the soil, meal or flour, wine and oil[4]. Further, the precise occasions when sacrifice was to be offered, the manner to be observed, the age, sex, and condition of the victim, the disposal of the various parts—all these things were minutely prescribed. For our present purpose it is only necessary to mention the most prominent features of the system, in so far as they illustrate the religious and moral conceptions of the post-exilic period.

[1] Ezekiel (xlv.) seems to contemplate a severance of the palace from the sanctuary.

[2] Lev. chh. i.—vii. [3] Iren. *Haer.* IV. 21. 3.

[4] Incense does not seem to have been used in early pre-exilic times. At any rate the use of it was now greatly extended; indeed, it was ordered by the Law to be solemnly offered twice daily (Ex. xxx. 7 foll.).

Piacular sacrifice.

The most striking feature of the Levitical system is the important place assigned to piacular sacrifice. The joyousness of primitive worship was characteristic of an age in which the sense of sin was very slightly developed; the sacrificial *cultus* of ancient Israel corresponded to the primitive conditions of agricultural life. The sin-offering in its later sense was almost, if not quite, unknown. Sacrifice was either an act of communion, expressive of a cheerful sense of the Divine favour, or an act of homage in which a gift was conveyed to the Deity. The distresses and perils of the seventh century, however, led to the gradual development of a more sombre type of worship. The catastrophe of the exile, pointed by the warnings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, gave a powerful stimulus to the sense of sin.

During this age, it has been truly said, 'the problem of acceptance with God exercised every thoughtful mind[1].' Hence in Ezekiel's program and in the Levitical code the element of atonement is specially prominent. The idea of the expiation of sin modified the ordinary conceptions of worship; and even ancient forms of sacrifice were invested with new significance in proportion as men came to realise more vividly the inviolable holiness of Jahveh, the sinfulness of man, and the need of priestly mediation in the approach to God.

The sin-offering is thus an institution distinctive of the Levitical *cultus*. In the order of thought, indeed, and in relation to covenant-fellowship with God, the sin-offering is followed by the burnt-offering, and that again by the peace-offering[2]; but in the book of Leviticus the order of treatment is as follows: the burnt-offering, the peace-offering, the sin-offering.

The burnt-offering.

(*a*) The *Burnt-offering* (עֹלָה) was apparently known, but was not very frequent, in early times. The earliest sacrifice was that in which a tribe or family held communion with the Deity by sharing

[1] W. Robertson Smith, *O. T. in J. C.* p. 380.

[2] Cp. Smend, p. 127. See generally Lev. chh. i., ii.

with Him a common meal[1]. The holocaust was probably a later development. It arose in times when the tribal deity was regarded rather with anxious fear than with confidence. To win or retain his favour it was felt that an offering of peculiar value was necessary, and the essential idea of the burnt-offering was originally that of paying a costly tribute to the Divine king. Accordingly, this was an exceptional form of sacrifice, expressive of some special feeling of devotion or self-surrender. Its central feature, as the alternative name כָּלִיל implies, was the entire consumption of the victim by fire on the altar. In the Levitical system the burnt-offering occupied an important place, for the principal act of worship in the Temple was the *daily* or *continual burnt-offering*[2], consisting in the oblation of a spotless lamb every morning and evening. Around this as a centre were grouped the prayers and praises of Israel. Probably the oblation of incense was simultaneously kindled in the Holy Place. Together with the burnt-offering were presented the *minḥah*, 'meal offering,' a portion of which, called 'the memorial,' was burned on the altar, and the *nesek*, or 'drink-offering' of wine. On sabbaths and great festivals the number of victims was increased. The daily burnt-offering was in fact looked upon as an act of national homage to Jahveh, and its cessation was supposed to involve the practical suspension of public worship[3].

(*b*) In the book of Leviticus the law of the *Peace-offering* is dealt with next in order[4]. Of this there were several varieties; the thank-offering, the free-will offering, the offering in fulfilment of a vow. In ancient times the chief feature of the *zebachim* was the sacred meal in which the god of the tribe, the officiating priest and the offerer together with his friends

[1] It may occasionally have had the significance of a thank-offering, or even of an atoning sacrifice. Cp. Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 329.

[2] תָּמִיד, Ex. xxix. 42; Num. xxviii. 3.

[3] Dan. viii. 11 foll., xi. 31, xii. 11.

[4] Lev. chh. iii., vii.

were supposed to participate. According to the legal ordinance, the inner fat portions, in which the sacred life was believed specially to reside, were burned upon the altar as the portion appropriated to the Deity; the 'wave-breast' was the perquisite of the whole body of the priests, the 'heave-shoulder' being assigned to the officiating priest[1]. All that remained was consumed by the offerer and his friends on the day of sacrifice. It is noteworthy, however, that the Levitical law lays the chief stress on the ritual of the sacrifice, while the sacred meal is withdrawn entirely into the background[2].

(*c*) Piacular sacrifice is, as has been already said, the most distinctive feature of the Levitical system. The language of Ezekiel implies that it was already known, but probably the old 'sin-' and 'trespass-offerings' originally consisted in money-payments made to the priests[3]. Its general purpose was to restore the covenant-communion between God and the worshipper which might have been interrupted even by an involuntary transgression. Two species of sacrifice are mentioned in the Law: (1) the *sin-offering* (חַטָּאת) for involuntary trespasses[4], (2) the *guilt-offering* (אָשָׁם), which apparently implied some intentional fraud admitting of compensation—some infraction of the rights of ownership, or some withholding from God of His due. The distinction between these two classes is not very clear; possibly it corresponds to the double aspect of sin, regarded on the one hand as demanding expiation, on the other as admitting to a certain extent of restitution. The kind of victim varied according to the grade of the offerer or the magnitude of the offence. The sacrifice was preceded by a verbal confession of guilt, uttered by the worshipper leaning upon the victim's head. The chief feature, however, was the

[1] On the significance of 'waving' and 'heaving,' see Oehler, *O. T. Theology*, § 133; Willis, *The Worship of the Old Covenant*, pp. 175 foll.

[2] Contrast Lev. vii. 14, 15 with Deut. xii. 11—25.

[3] Cp. 1 Sam. vi. 3 foll., and 2 Kings xii. 16. See Ezek. xl. 39, xlii. 13, etc.

[4] Lev. iv.

ceremonial sprinkling of the blood at spots to which belonged different degrees of sanctity implying different stages of nearness to God. In the case of the other sacrifices the blood was simply poured out at the foot of the altar; but in the case of the sin-offering it was solemnly sprinkled either on the horns of the altar, or (when carried into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement) upon and before the mercy-seat. The flesh of the victim was withdrawn from common use, as a thing too holy for ordinary food. It was to be eaten in the sanctuary by the priests[1].

The effect of the sin-offering is described in the phrase 'to make atonement' (lit. *to make a covering*) for the offender. In token of the sinner's dedication of the victim to this office he was ordered to press his hand on its head[2]. This significant act, coupled with the requirement of an unblemished victim and with the ceremonial sprinkling of its blood, seems to imply that the offender relied for the renewal of covenant-fellowship with God on the *blood* (*i.e.* on the *life*) of the victim[3], which Jahveh accepted as a substitute for the life of the offerer. The blood or life of the animal was the medium of atonement. As offered by the sinner it expressed his penitence, and his submission to the penalties of sin; as accepted by Jahveh it 'covered' the sinner's guilt. The blood, being the seat of life, was the most precious gift that man could offer—a gift which was supposed to render invisible the sin in expiation of which it was presented[4].

[1] Lev. vi. 24 foll.; x. 17.

[2] On this custom (*semichah*) see Schultz, *O. T. Theology*, I. 391 [E. T.]: 'By the laying on of his hand the sacrificer dedicates each victim as his own property to some higher object, that object of course varying according to the intention with which he offers the sacrifice. Thus in the case of a sin-offering he dedicates it as a means of atonement for himself, in order that it may be the bearer and instrument of his repentance.' So Marti, p. 229.

[3] See Lev. xvii. 11.

[4] On the word כִּפֶּר see the art. on 'Propitiation' in Hastings' *DB.*

Effect of piacular sacrifice.

The frequency of sin-offerings was a kind of object-lesson to Israel, awakening and deepening the consciousness of sin, and suggesting (as some of the Psalms indicate) the need of Divine grace to effect a true and complete cleansing of heart. On the other hand, there was an obvious danger of confusion between ritual and moral offences. The constant testimony of prophecy that the moral law only was the law of God, was practically ignored in the elaborate system of Levitical atonement. The least ritual offence was regarded as defiling the sanctuary, and every such transgression must be carefully expiated lest Jahveh should be again provoked to forsake His desecrated dwelling-place in Israel's midst. The entire system of piacular sacrifice culminates in the observances of the Day of Atonement.

3. *Ceremonies of purification.*

The object aimed at in the various rites of purification enjoined by the Law was to qualify the individual Israelite for taking his part in the services of the sanctuary, and to maintain his fellowship with the holy community. If by any mischance he had incurred defilement, a special ceremony was necessary for his restoration to purity. Everything relating to sexual conditions or to death involved defilement; the disease of leprosy demanded special rites of purification; and a Nazirite who had 'separated himself' to God for a certain period, was liable to accidents which might interrupt the fulfilment of his vow and necessitate consequent purgation.

The chief means of purification was of course the ceremonial use of water. In minor instances of personal uncleanness, the washing of the body and a short period of seclusion from the congregation were sufficient. In the case of that

The idea is that the blood of the sin-offering withdraws the sin from God's sight, annuls it, and so reinstates the sinner in His favour. In such passages as Is. vi. 7, Jer. xviii. 23 it is God Himself who 'covers' the sin, *i.e.* removes it from His sight.

higher degree of impurity which was incurred through contact with a dead body, certain 'water of separation[1]' was ordered to be used. It consisted of pure water mingled with the ashes of a red heifer, which was slain and wholly burnt, together with cedar wood, scarlet wool and hyssop, outside the camp. The ashes were laid up in a 'clean' place apart from the camp, to be mingled with fresh water and used as occasion might require[2]. In this case, as in some others, we have an ordinance which is doubtless a survival from primitive ritual; but, like other rites, the law of the red heifer receives a higher symbolic significance in the Levitical code. The heifer was regarded as a special kind of sin-offering, and the whole ordinance vividly impressed on the community the necessity of moral purity for approach to God. In the same way the ceremonies used for the cleansing of the leper[3] symbolised the restoration of the sinner, not merely from a living death, but from a condition of hopeless defilement to a state of purity.

Ordinance of the red heifer.

4. *Holy seasons.*

It remains to say something of the chief holy seasons (*mô'adim*) prescribed in the Levitical law. The older feasts are incorporated in the calendar of the Priestly Code, but speaking broadly a fresh significance is given to them. They are altered both in general character and in ceremonial details; feasts which were originally connected with agriculture become purely ecclesiastical[4].

The *Sabbath*, for instance, held a place of far greater importance after the exile than it did in earlier times. It became henceforth a token of membership in the holy community[5].

[1] *i.e.* water to remove uncleanness. Kautzsch suggests that the pollution supposed to be involved in contact with death is to be explained by 'the consciousness that at least part of the mourning and burial customs had their root in another religion,' *DB*, v. 614.

[2] Num. xix. [3] Lev. xiv. Cp. Smend, p. 328. [4] Lev. xxiii.

[5] See Exod. xxxi. 12—17, xxxv. 1—3; Lev. xxiii. 3.

Its origin was explained no longer from a human but from a Divine standpoint. It was a solemn commemoration of the rest of God after the work of creation[1]. Hence it was far more rigorously observed than formerly. Even the slightest infringement of the Sabbath rest was punishable by death[2]. The Sabbath was in fact no longer a social, but a purely religious observance.

Connected with the Sabbath were the *sabbatical year* and the *year of jubilee.* The latter institution is peculiar to P, and there is no evidence that it was ever anything more than an ideal arrangement, intended to enforce the idea that Israel's territory belonged by right to Jahveh[3]. But the principal object of the ordinance was to recall to Israel's memory that aspect of Jahveh's character which had been earliest made known to the chosen people. 'The God who once redeemed His people from Egypt and acquired them as His possession here appears again as a redeemer[4],' restoring to the bondman his liberty and mortgaged property to its hereditary possessor. That it had a spiritual significance we may infer from the fact that the year of jubilee was to be proclaimed by sound of trumpets on the Day of Atonement. Possibly the writer of Isaiah ch. lxi. alludes to the year of jubilee as typical of the Messianic age[5].

The feast of the *new moon* was only observed with special solemnity in the case of the seventh month (*Tishri*), which was the first month of the civil year. The opening day of this month was called the feast of Trumpets[6].

The three ancient festivals or 'pilgrimage feasts' (*ḥaggim*) of the agricultural year were retained in the Levitical law, but with some change of character.

The Priestly Code contains scarcely any reminiscence of

[1] Cp. Gen. ii. 1 foll. (P), and Ex. xx. 11 foll. with Deut. v. 15.
[2] Num. xv. 32 foll.
[3] Lev. xxv. 8.
[4] Oehler, § 152.
[5] Cp. Lk. iv. 21; Heb. iv. 9.
[6] Lev. xxiii. 23 foll.

the real origin of the *Passover*. Among the ancient Hebrews the *Pesach*, like the 'sheep-shearing,' was apparently an annual feast, observed in the spring season. It had originally no doubt a certain piacular significance, one of its principal features being the presentation at the sanctuary, and the oblation in sacrifice, of the firstlings of the flock and herd[1]. This ancient observance had features in common with each of the three species of offering. It was a sacrifice of atonement, the blood being sprinkled on the altar; parts of the victim were wholly consumed by fire as in the burnt-offering, and the sacrifice was followed by a sacred meal. In P, however, the details of the Passover are definitely connected with the traditional incidents of the exodus. The ancient feast of *Maṣṣoth*, which originally *followed* the *Pesach* and had a distinct significance[2], is regarded by P as an integral part of it; the domestic character of the celebration is subordinated to the purpose of a national commemoration. 'The sacred meal has really become a sacrament, a covenant-meal, at which the members of the holy congregation...meet together to commemorate the national deliverance[3].' The public offerings take the place of private sacrifices. Thus in New Testament times the Passover had simply acquired a national significance.

The feast of *Pentecost* or *Weeks*[4] originally marked the close of the wheat-harvest. It retains in P its primary characteristics as a feast of thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth. It was only in post-biblical times that it was supposed to have had some original connection with the delivery of the

[1] It is called *Zebach* in Ex. xii. 27, xxxiv. 25 (JE), and *Korban* in Num. ix. 7 foll. (P); the bitter herbs and the sprinkling of the victim's blood point to a primitive sacrifice of atonement, intended perhaps to secure the divine blessing on the coming harvest. Cp. Schultz, I. 364.

[2] The feast of *Maṣṣoth* perhaps inaugurated the harvest—the first swing of the sickle (Lev. xxiii. 10). The *Pesach* was a sacrifice *preceding* the harvest. The two feasts naturally occurred at about the same period.

[3] Schultz, I. 364. [4] Ex. xxxiv. 22.

Law by Moses on Sinai. The close relation of the feast to the Passover was emphasised by the 'waving' before the Lord, and assignment to the priest, of the two loaves made from the flour of the new wheat, whereas at the Passover a single sheaf of barley was thus 'waved[1].'

The Passover and Pentecost marked certain stages in the uncompleted harvest. The feast of *Tabernacles* originally celebrated the ingathering of the remaining produce of the soil. It was the most free and joyous of all Jewish festivals. But in P the command to dwell in booths is an antiquarian relic, and is now for the first time connected with Israel's nomadic life in the wilderness. In lieu of the tithes which seem to have been originally offered at this feast, stated sacrifices marked the day as one of religious solemnity[2]. The festival was enriched by splendid and suggestive ceremonies, *e.g.* the carrying of branches of palm, myrtle, willow and citron, the daily libation of water fetched from the pool of Siloam[3], and an illumination of 'the court of the women' on the first day of the feast. The last day (called '*Aṣereth*[4]) probably marked the close of the whole annual cycle of feasts, and was sometimes regarded as constituting a separate feast.

The Day of Atonement.

An institution which overshadowed even the feasts in importance and solemnity was the *Day of Atonement* ('The Day' as it was called by the later Jews), observed on the tenth day of the

[1] Lev. xxiii. 10—20.

[2] Josephus, *Antiq.* VIII. 4. 1, calls it the holiest and greatest of the feasts. In some passages of the O. T. it is called 'the feast.' See also Joseph. *Antiq.* III. 10. 4, XIII. 13. 5; Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, II. 157 foll.

[3] Cp. Isai. xii. 3.

[4] On עצרת see Ryle on *Neh.* viii. 18 (Camb. Bible), and White and Driver on *Lev.* xxiii. 36 (Polychrome Bible). In Lev. xxiii. 36 it is transl. 'solemn assembly' (R.V.); cp. Deut. xvi. 8. The alternative, 'closing day' (LXX. ἐξόδιον), has been suggested (cp. Oehler, *O.T. Theology*, § 156), but this is unlikely. See also Jer. ix. 2; 2 K. x. 20; Am. v. 21.

seventh month, five days before the feast of Tabernacles. The observance of this day stood in very close relation to the entire legal system of expiation and purification; it 'summed up and interpreted the whole conception of sacrifices which were designed by Divine appointment to gain for man access to God[1].' Apparently the Day of Atonement was not introduced before the time of Ezra's reforms, and its character was in keeping with the penitential temper which the exile did so much to foster. The fundamental idea of the day was that the community as a whole was defiled by sin and was thereby rendered unholy; and that it needed some special and periodical purgation in order to restore it to its true position as the people of God[2]. The 'uncleanness' of the people involved also that of the Levitical ministers and of the sanctuary itself; for these also an 'atonement' was necessary. Thus in the actual order of ceremonies observed on the day the reconciliation of the priesthood preceded that of the laity. The High Priest began by presenting a sin-offering for himself and his house. The blood of the victim (a bullock) was solemnly sprinkled on and before the mercy-seat. Next a sin-offering (one of two goats, chosen by lot) was sacrificed for the people, the blood, as before, being sprinkled at the mercy-seat. The Holy Place itself was next purified by the sprinkling of the sacrificial blood on the horns of the altar of incense, and on the brazen altar of burnt-offering. Thus the separate compartments of the sanctuary,—the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place, and the outer court,—were cleansed. Priest, people, and sanctuary were alike reconciled to God. Finally came the dismissal of the other goat. When the High Priest had solemnly confessed over its head the sins of the people, the goat was led away into the wilderness as devoted

[1] Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 279.

[2] An observance of this kind, and having a similar intention, is already prescribed in Ezek. xlv. 18—20, which perhaps forms the basis of the elaborate ceremonial described in Lev. xvi.

to '*Azazel*'[1]. This symbolical act (like the loosing of the live bird in connection with the cleansing of the leper) was a kind of pledge or assurance given to Israel that its burden of sin was really lifted off and removed[2]. When all these ceremonies were concluded the High Priest resumed his 'golden vestments' and offered the regular evening sacrifice—an act which implied that the privilege of communion with God was once more restored to the people.

The Day of Atonement formed the coping-stone, so to speak, of the whole priestly legislation. The observance of it was a comprehensive way of securing that technical 'holiness' which was essential for the approach to Jahveh in His sanctuary[3]. It was a guarantee of the efficacy of the entire *cultus*. But it also pointed beyond itself to an atoning sacrifice corresponding to the profound ideas of sin and penitence which the ordinance was calculated to suggest—a sacrifice not marked, as was the Day of Atonement, by signs of imperfection[4].

It does not fall within the scope of this book to discuss

[1] The meaning of this phrase is disputed. Apparently '*Azazel* is neither (i) the name of a place, nor (ii) a title of the goat, 'goat for dismissal,' or 'departing goat,' as seems to be implied in the LXX. ἀποπόμπαιος or εἰς τὴν ἀποπόμπην (Lev. xvi. 8, 10), Aq. τράγος ἀπολυόμενος, Eng. 'scapegoat.' '*Azazel* is more probably the name of a personal being or demon supposed to inhabit the wilderness (cp. Lev. xvii. 7). If so, we have here perhaps a relic of an ancient heathen rite, the demon being conceived as ἀλεξίκακος, 'averter of ill.' In the *Book of Enoch* '*Azazel* occurs as leader of the evil angels of Gen. vi. 2—4. See *Book of Enoch*, x. 4, with Charles' note.

[2] Cp. Lev. xiv. 53. See also Zech. v. 7 foll.

[3] The Atonement probably related to all the sins of the year which had not been already expiated by penitence or special *piacula*. Cp. Hebr. ix. 7, ἀγνοήματα.

[4] *e.g.* (1) the necessity of being often repeated, (2) the use of the blood of irrational victims which can never take away sin, (3) the admission only once in a year of Israel's representative to the Holy of Holies, and the total exclusion of the people. See Heb. ix.

the typological significance of the Levitical system. It is certain that it must have exercised a powerful influence on Jewish thought, awakening yearnings and aspirations which nothing less or lower than the kingdom of Christ could satisfy. It is legitimate to argue from the references made to the legal ordinances in the New Testament that the system, regarded as a whole, was a vast prophecy of the Redeemer's Person and Mediatorial work. Here, however, we are only concerned with the significance and effects of the Priestly Code during the period when it was actually in vogue—a period when it was above all things necessary that the Jews should jealously guard, amid the disintegrating influences that surrounded them, all that was really distinctive in their religion. If Judaism was with any degree of success to resist the subtle power of Hellenism it must needs consolidate its strength under the stern discipline of the Law; in the Levitical system it must enshrine its peculiar treasure—its heritage of belief in one holy, spiritual, and omnipotent God. Ezra and Nehemiah were guided by a true instinct to perceive that the Jews were not as yet sufficiently confirmed in their religion to resist the danger of absorption that was involved in the contact with heathenism; indeed, as has been said, 'Between promise and fulfilment the *law* must intervene, as the strict schoolmaster of the immature...If the *spirit* of the prophetic religion, its ethical monotheism, was to become the fixed inalienable possession of a whole community of people, it was necessary that it should embody itself in the sensible forms of a positive law regulating the whole life[1].'

And if it be objected that in the Levitical ritual the idea of holiness is to a great extent externalised, and that the Law in making sacrifice the principal element in the service of Jahveh undoes the work of the prophets, it may be replied, first, that in the same volume with Leviticus and Numbers

[1] Pfleiderer, *Gifford Lectures*, vol. II. p. 52.

was incorporated the older legislation, and especially the Deuteronomic Code, which reflects the essential spirit of prophecy; secondly, that the teaching of the prophets was, if not held in equal veneration, at least not less accessible to the Jew than the Law itself[1]; thirdly, that as a matter of fact the noblest fruit of the legal discipline of Israel is to be seen rather in the warm, humble, and ardent religion of the Psalter than in the rigid scrupulosities of Pharisaism. While the strict discipline of the Law effectually suppressed the lawless, sensual, and heathenish elements of the older worship, it at the same time fostered the growth of a deep and tender personal piety, to which the law of God was an object, not of aversion and terror, but of devotion and love.

[1] It should also be remembered that some passages of post-exilic prophecy are calculated to qualify the purely ritualistic tendency of religion at this epoch: see *e.g.* Isai. lviii. 3 foll. (the true and the false fast): cp. Joel ii. 12, 13. On the other hand the *general* tendency both of Joel and of Isai. lvi.—lxvi. corresponds to the legalistic temper fostered by the elaboration of worship.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CONTACT OF JUDAISM WITH HELLENISM.

Historical survey.

For convenience' sake some bare outlines of history may be given at the opening of this chapter. In 538 the empire of Babylon fell, and the Persians became for two centuries the masters of the East. By the battle of Issus in 333 the supremacy in Western Asia was transferred to Alexander of Macedon. After his death in 323 the suzerainty of Palestine was an object of dispute between Alexander's successors (the *diadochi*). The Jews were at different times subject to the sway of different masters. On the whole, with a few brief intervals, Palestine was a dependency of Egypt and remained under the rule of the Ptolemies throughout the third century B.C. Early in the second century, however, Antiochus the Great wrested from Egypt the possession of Palestine, which was incorporated in the kingdom of the Seleucidae until the outbreak of the Maccabaean struggle (198—167).

Accordingly, we now proceed to study the effect on Jewish thought of nearly four centuries of heathen domination.

The domination of Persia.

Restored to Palestine by the Persian conqueror Cyrus, the Jewish community found itself encompassed and to a considerable extent invaded by heathen influences. Judaea was an insignificant province of the Persian empire, and for two centuries the Jews were at the mercy of their heathen masters. It is plain from the

writings of Haggai and Zechariah that while the rise of Persia was hailed by the Jews in exile as the signal of deliverance from hopeless bondage, the Persian yoke was speedily found to be not less galling and burdensome than that of Babylon. The Jews in Palestine enjoyed little real freedom; their proceedings as a religious community were jealously watched by the Persian satrap of the district; they were subject not only to heavy taxation, but to enforced service in the Persian armies and to other interferences with personal liberty. In Babylonia, Syria, Asia Minor and Egypt large communities of Jews gradually formed themselves, closely bound to their brethren in Judaea by the ties of race, by the possession and observance of the Law, and by a common interest in the worship of the Temple at Jerusalem[1]. But for all the Jews alike this was a period of inevitable contact with non-Jewish civilisation, and it is a matter of interest to enquire what was Israel's relation to the heathen world, and what were the effects of its intercourse with the Gentiles on religious thought.

In answering this question we must bear in mind that the Jew was to some extent *unconsciously* affected by the religious systems with which he came in contact. The religion of Persia for instance was not of the same type as the grandiose idolatry of Babylon, which excited the scorn of Deutero-Isaiah. The Persian shared with the Jew the belief in a Supreme God who was the enemy of evil and the rewarder of righteousness. Again, the elaborate angelology of Zoroastrianism appealed to that Jewish instinct which, while it exalted God to a position of ever higher transcendence, demanded a system of intermediary beings through whom the governance of the world and the operations of the Divine providence might be carried on. The Hebrew doctrine of a celestial host surround-

[1] On the close relations subsisting between the Eastern Dispersion and their brethren in Palestine see Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, bk. i. ch. 1.

ing the throne of the Most High and executing His will[1], found its counterpart in the system of Zoroaster, and there can be no doubt that Jewish angelology underwent, in post-exilic times, a marked development as the result of contact with Persian beliefs. In the books of Daniel and Tobit and 2 (or 4) Esdras angels are very prominent figures; in their functions, numbers and organisation the influence of Persia can be distinctly traced. The angels are described as ranked in a hierarchy under seven princes, having special names and functions; there are angels who act as tutelary spirits assigned to particular nations, and angels who serve as guardians of individual men. In later literature we find angels described as present in the different elements of nature[2]. It is likewise probable that the accentuation in Persian religion of the opposition between a good and evil principle tended to give distinctness to the dim figure of the Old Testament 'Satan.' In post-exilic literature (Zech. iii., the book of Job, and 1 Chron. xxi.) we have the first distinct conception of Satan as an accuser and tempter of men and the chief representative of a dualistic hostility to God. In the later apocryphal and pseudepigraphic writings there is a highly developed demonology which can hardly be independent of Persian influence[3]. There is less ground for thinking that the Jewish doctrine of the resurrection and of the last things has affinities with Parsism, though the connection has often been maintained. It is, however, a significant fact that this doctrine first rose into prominence during and after the 'Persian period,' and there seems to be no good reason for denying that Jewish belief on

[1] For references see Oehler, *O. T. Theology*, §§ 196—199. Schultz, 1. 330, maintains that 'the development of angelology may be explained from purely O. T. materials.'

[2] The same idea appears in Rev. xiv. 18, xvi. 5, xix. 17. On the whole subject see Fairweather in *DB*, v. p. 286 (art. 'Development of Doctrine'); and Moulton in *DB*, IV. (art. 'Zoroastrianism').

[3] This influence seems to be specially clear in the case of Tobit.

the subject was developed more or less under Persian stimulus. A few minor details of the eschatology contained in certain apocalyptic books are apparently due to the same influence. At the same time there are many characteristics of later Jewish thought on these subjects which may be fairly attributed to the general tendencies of the post-exilic age, and to the fact that there were fundamental resemblances between the religions of Israel and Persia. It is needless to insist upon any large degree of mutual influence where there already existed a certain spiritual affinity.

The contact of Judaism with Hellenism, on the other hand, was fruitful both in spiritual and intellectual results. Sufficient evidence of this is afforded by the Jewish-Alexandrian literature belonging to the two centuries before Christ, the book of Wisdom being perhaps the most typical specimen of its class. At this point, however, we are concerned not so much with the special results that flowed from the fusion of Greek with Hebrew thought, as with the general question, What was the effect on the religion of Israel of that wider intercourse with the Gentile world which began, roughly speaking, with the return from Babylon?

Distinct ideals.

We must, then, bear in mind that during and after the exile two distinct ideals contended for the mastery in Israelitish thought. There was on the one hand the vision of the prophets, crowned by the teaching of Deutero-Isaiah—the vision of a Messianic kingdom embracing the heathen nations as fellow-worshippers with Israel of the one true God. On the other hand there was the ideal of Ezekiel, Ezra and Nehemiah—the ideal of a 'holy seed' preserving in its integrity the ancestral faith of Israel, separated from the pollutions of heathendom by a ring-fence of legalism, and rendering to Jahveh an acceptable worship of His own ordering and appointment. Each of these ideals found zealous votaries. We see perhaps one phase of the struggle for supremacy in the incidents connected with Ezra's

principal reform—the summary expulsion of non-Jewish wives. It is clear that this movement was only successfully carried through by strong-handed measures, and that it roused vehement and prolonged opposition. The schism organised by Manasseh was a direct consequence of Ezra's policy[1], and it is not accurate to assume that the resentment, of which this secession was a prominent symptom, was wholly selfish. The measures of the reforming party were not merely regarded by many as an unwarrantable outrage on personal liberty: they seemed in a measure to do violence to the spirit of the prophets, and to hinder the fulfilment of their hopes of a kingdom of God embracing all the nations of the earth. It has been supposed by some that the book of Ruth is the product of opposition to Ezra's reforms: that it is in effect a plea for the *toleration* of intermarriage with women of alien race, a plea supported partly by the fact that the first true king was himself traditionally descended from a Moabitess, partly by the suggestion conveyed in the incidents of the story, that the Jews did not possess a monopoly of piety, and that women who, like Ruth, displayed eminent virtues, might be cordially welcomed into the community of Israel if willing to adopt Jewish rites and customs. The book shows that what constitutes a true Israelite is not purity of physical descent, but faith in Jahveh and devotion to Him[2].

Jewish view of the heathen.

The puritan spirit, however, ultimately triumphed, as perhaps was both inevitable and desirable in view of Israel's immediate needs. But the triumph involved some unfortunate consequences. Spiritual pride was no imaginary danger at a period when devotion to the Law was the characteristic mark of loyalty to

[1] Cp. Neh. xiii. 28 foll.

[2] Such is the view strongly advocated by Kuenen, Cornill, Piepenbring and others. See especially Cornill's remark (*Einleitung in das A. T.* § 22), 'Ruth zwar ihrer Abstammung nach eine Heidin, aber an Frömmigkeit eine echte Israelitin war, etc.'

Judaism. Even in the pre-exilic period the heathen were commonly regarded as objects rather of Jahveh's judgment than of His favour. Their territory was 'polluted[1]'; their only hope of salvation lay in adhesion to the chosen people. Indeed, speaking generally, the earlier prophets think of the heathen world as a defiant power opposed to the kingdom of God. In each age of Hebrew history the political situation determined what particular nation was representative of the hostile world. It might be Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, or some other of the petty neighbour kingdoms; to Micah, Isaiah, Nahum it was Assyria, just as to Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Deutero-Isaiah it was Babylon; to Ezekiel Gog and Magog; to the writer of Daniel the Seleucid kingdom. Only occasionally did pre-exilic prophecy rise to a wider and more generous conception of the Divine kingdom, and recognise in the oppressors of Israel possible subjects and votaries of Jahveh. After the exile, however, the reaction from heathenism was naturally strong and lasting. Jewish aversion to the world gradually developed into that bitter hatred of the non-Jewish peoples to which Tacitus alludes[2]. Antagonism was intensified partly by the memory of all that Israel had suffered at the hands of the world-power; partly by the frequent ceremonial difficulties involved in any intercourse between law-abiding Jews and their Gentile neighbours. Long before the close of the exile we find traces of this hostile feeling in Ezekiel's description of a comprehensive judgment falling upon the heathen nations[3], a description which in its details passes far beyond the less explicit denunciations of earlier prophecy[4]. To the Jews of the

[1] Amos vii. 17. Cp. Hos. ix. 3.

[2] *Hist.* v. 5: 'Adversus omnes alios hostile odium.'

[3] Chaps. xxxviii., xxxix.

[4] Davidson, *The Book of Ezekiel* (Camb. Bible), p. 274, says, 'The description seems almost a creation, the embodiment of an idea—the idea of the irreconcilable hostility of the nations of the world to the religion of Jehovah.' It is noteworthy that the conception of Ezekiel becomes a standing theme of later apocalyptic prophecy.

Maccabaean epoch the heathen are the enemies of God, *a foolish people* blaspheming the name of Jahveh[1]. The faithful Israelite could not but invoke the vengeance of God on those who had *devoured Jacob and laid waste his dwelling-place.* In some parts of the later literature of the Old Testament the spirit of passionate aversion and disdain finds vent in language of burning intensity. Malachi for instance denounces Edom as *the border of wickedness*[2]; the book of Esther narrates an episode which finds its climax in a wholesale slaughter by the Jews of their heathen foes[3]; the contest between Syria and Egypt for the possession of Palestine probably aroused that thirst for the destruction of the heathen which pervades the later chapters of the book of Zechariah (ix.—xiv.); and from the Maccabaean rising onwards, owing chiefly perhaps to the influence of the book of Daniel, the hatred of aliens grows in intensity, and its practical culmination may be seen in the fanatical excesses of the Zealots in the desperate struggle with Rome[4]. Meanwhile the early prophetic expectation of the 'Day of Jahveh'—a day full of terror, not for the heathen merely, but for the *sinners in Zion*—virtually faded from Israel's view. The warnings of Isaiah, Amos, and Zephaniah find indeed some echo in the solemn language of Malachi (iii. 1—5, iv. 1, 2), but the prevalent tendency among the Jews was to look upon Israel as the 'righteous nation,' and upon

[1] Ps. lxxiv. 10, 18, 22; cp. lxxix. 6 foll. For the hatred of the Samaritans as a renegade sect see Ecclus. l. 26.

[2] Mal. i. 2—4. Cp. the book of Obadiah and Isai. xxxiv. The apocalyptic visions of a wholesale destruction of the heathen in Joel and Isai. xxiv.—xxvii. seem to belong to the age when the Persian empire was nearing its dissolution (*c.* 350).

[3] Esth. ix. 14—16.

[4] Cp. Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* II. 21. 2; *Antiq.* XI. 6. 5; *c. Apion.* II. 7, 10, 14, 41; and see Schürer, § 31, pp. 295 foll. [E. T.]. In the post-canonical books (especially in the books of Maccabees and Judith) a temper is displayed which justifies the language of Tacitus. See Schultz, II. 20, 21.

their heathen oppressors as reserved for a fearful vengeance in the day of Jahveh's self-manifestation.

Other influences.

The temper of mind which we have been considering was perhaps that of the majority of the Jews; but other influences gradually came into play and tended to strengthen what had never quite died out—the yearning for a wider and closer fellowship with mankind and for the fulfilment of ideals of which prophecy had never wholly lost sight, and to which, during the exile, Deutero-Isaiah had given noble and sublime utterance.

Universalism.

The conception of Israel's religion as universal in scope, and of Jerusalem as the centre of a world-wide kingdom in which all nations might be included as worshippers of Jahveh, had not been left without witness even in pre-exilic times. It was foreshadowed in some of the earliest narratives, *e.g.* those which depicted the negotiations of Amorite or Hittite kings and chieftains with the patriarchs, the exaltation of Joseph in Egypt, the friendly relations of David and Solomon with successive kings of Tyre[1]. The book of Deuteronomy forbade the abhorrence of an Edomite or an Egyptian; in the third generation their children might even be admitted into *the congregation of Jahveh*[2]. Further there is a gradual expansion—though not always easy to trace—in the ideas of pre-exilic prophecy concerning the Messianic kingdom. Amos distinctly teaches that Jahveh controls with a providential purpose the movements of the heathen nations, and (as we have already seen) he extends the area of Jahveh's judicial action so as to include them. Prophecy also speaks of the nations as employed by Jahveh to execute His purposes, and the thought is occasionally suggested that the object of the Divine judgments is the conversion and education of the

[1] Gen. xii. 3, 4 (J) is a case in point (the blessing upon Abraham) and possibly Ex. iv. 22 in which Israel's position as 'firstborn' implies Jahveh's relationship to other nations. Cp. Jer. xxxi. 9.

[2] Deut. xxiii. 7, 8.

heathen[1]. In the Messianic age, when Jahveh's purpose of judgment is finally accomplished, the nations will flow to Zion and seek to share the spiritual blessings of the people of God; the reign of the Messianic king will inaugurate an era of peace in which the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Jahveh[2]. In a remarkable passage which has been already noticed (Isai. xix.), the prophet first describes the chastisement which is destined to prepare Egypt for conversion, and then predicts the coming of a time when Egypt and Assyria shall be united with Israel as recipients of Jahveh's blessing[3].

It is, however, on the eve of the exile and during its continuance that universalistic ideas find their clearest expression. Thus Jeremiah iii. 17 repeats and expands the thought of Micah iv. 1; and Ezekiel, without actually admitting the nations to Messianic blessings, emphatically declares that by the judgments inflicted on them they shall be led to know that Jahveh is Israel's God[4]. On the other hand, Deutero-Isaiah represents the heathen peoples as waiting for Jahveh's salvation; Israel is His messenger to the nations; Cyrus the Persian is honoured as the instrument and symbol of the conversion of the heathen to the worship of the only true God; Israel shares in the exaltation of her God, and Jerusalem becomes the centre of a converted world[5].

The rebuilding of the Temple naturally encouraged hopes of this kind. Zechariah speaks of the nations as visiting Jerusalem to seek Jahveh's favour, and Haggai foresees a greater glory for the second than for the first Temple, since all nations

[1] Isai. x. 5 foll. Cp. Hab. i. 6; Jer. xxvii. 5; Ezek. xxx. 3 foll.; Dan. ii. 21. See also Zeph. ii. 11, iii. 9, 20.

[2] Mic. iv. 1 (Isai. ii. 1); Isai. xi. 9. It must be remembered that the date of these passages is very uncertain; but they may be provisionally assumed to be pre-exilic.

[3] See p. 88. The passage 1 Kings viii. 41 foll. should also be compared in this connection.

[4] Ezek. xxv.—xxxii. *passim.*

[5] Isai. xlii.—xlix. *passim.*

shall bring into it their *desirable things*. The book of Malachi even recognises in the religious earnestness of the Gentiles a form of devotion which Jahveh is willing to accept[1]. Moreover after the exile the ideas of Deutero-Isaiah are developed in passages which probably belong to the Persian age. Thus the Law of Deuteronomy xxiii. is abrogated. Even those who have hitherto been excluded from the kingdom of God are admitted thereto; the house of Jahveh is a house of prayer for all nations (Isai. lvi.)[2]. Again, in Isai. lx.—lxii. we perhaps find reflected the aspirations of a yet later age. Israel is here depicted as the priest of humanity; the people of God sees itself surrounded by a galaxy of nations offering their tribute of praise and submission to Jahveh[3]. Finally, in Isai. xxv., xxvi. Zion is exalted as the spiritual metropolis of the world. A feast of Jahveh's providing is made ready for all the nations; the veil spread over them is finally done away[4]. Nor must we forget the note that rings through several of the psalms which describe heathen monarchs as united with the people of the God of Abraham in the service of the true God[5]. The final hope of prophecy is not indeed so much for individual converts[6] as for the turning of whole nations to Jahveh, but it is noteworthy that even in P the distinctions made in Deuteronomy ch. xxiii. between aliens of a different nationality do not reappear. It is assumed that foreigners can become members of the holy community by circumcision and consequent acceptance of the Law.

[1] Zech. viii. 20 foll.; Hag. ii. 6 foll.; Mal. i. 6.

[2] Dr Cheyne surmises that Isai. lvi. 1—8 is addressed to proselytes and to some who, having been forced to become eunuchs at the Persian court, have followed Nehemiah to Jerusalem. He suggests as the date of the passage 444.

[3] On the occasion of these chh. see Cheyne, in *Isaiah* (Polychrome Bible), p. 195.

[4] These chh. seem to belong to the period of Alexander's conquests: see p. 158, note 2.

[5] Ps. xlvii.; cp. lxvii., lxxii., lxxxvii., cxvii., cxlviii.

[6] But see 1 Kings viii. 41 foll.

The book of Jonah.

There remains one remarkable book—that of *Jonah*—in which the universalism of prophecy may be said to find its natural climax, and which proves that the ideals of Deutero-Isaiah had not altogether disappeared even in an age when the pressure of the heathen yoke on Israel must have seemed most galling and severe. Everything points to the conclusion that this book is a didactic narrative or parable intended to enforce a particular lesson, namely, that Jahveh cares for the heathen and cherishes a purpose of grace concerning them; that they are capable of repentance and amendment, and that Israel only fulfils its ideal destiny in so far as it becomes the prophet and messenger of Divine salvation to the nations. Incidentally the writer of Jonah rebukes the sullen spirit which pervaded the mass of his compatriots in Palestine and elsewhere. They were eagerly awaiting the fulfilment of Jahveh's threatenings. They looked for the speedy overthrow of the heathen powers that oppressed or persecuted Israel, and meanwhile they ignored, or were reluctant to fulfil, their appointed mission to mankind. The self-will of Jonah himself found its counterpart in the self-will of his people. And just as Jeremiah[1] had taught that even the heathen nations might by timely repentance avert the judgments of God, so the writer of Jonah crowns the universalism of earlier prophecy by his implied doctrine that Jahveh is no mere national Deity, the God of a single people, but the Creator and Father of mankind, whose *mercy is over all His works*. In all probability the book of Jonah is the last, as it is the grandest and simplest utterance of the Old Testament on the subject of Jahveh's relation to the heathen world.

Prophetic individualism.

Apart from the explicit statements of the pre-exilic prophets, we must recollect that there was another element in their teaching which tended in the direction of 'universalism.' There is, for instance, the in-

[1] Jer. xviii. 7.

dividualism of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Jeremiah predicts the coming of a time when Jahveh shall have compassion on His *evil neighbours*, *i.e.* the nations which come into collision with Israel or invade its territory with hostile intent[1]. But in his vision of a new covenant under which Jahveh will write His law in the hearts of men, he speaks definitely of religion as a personal possession consisting in the fellowship of man as man with Jahveh[2]. According to Jeremiah, religion essentially implies a spiritual relationship to God, independent of the emblems connected with the ancient worship of Israel[3]. The circumcision of the future is to be that of the *heart*[4]. Following the same line of thought, Ezekiel expressly indicates the agency by which this change is destined to come about[5]. Deutero-Isaiah speaks as one who has learned by experience the fulfilment of these truths. To him religion means spiritual communion between the soul and God. Now in this 'spiritualisation' of religion lay hopes for the heathen world. 'When religion is thus carried back to its deepest centre, to the fellowship of man in his heart with God, the separating limits of the national cults fall away as meaningless; the most inward experience of what is purely human can no longer be a privilege of one people above the others; it must become a thing of the whole of mankind[6].'

Effect of the Dispersion.

The tendency to comprehensiveness became naturally much more pronounced among the Jews of the Dispersion than in Palestine itself. In great centres of population like Antioch or Alexandria, for instance, Jews and Gentiles were drawn closely together by the exigencies of trade, commerce, and daily intercourse, and there was undoubtedly a certain amount of mutual attraction. The growing wealth of the Jews enabled them to use the educational

[1] Jer. xii. 14 foll.
[2] Jer. xxxi. 31 foll.
[3] Jer. iii. 16.
[4] Jer. xxxii. 39. Cp. Deut. xxx. 6.
[5] Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 24 foll.
[6] Pfleiderer, *Gifford Lectures*, II. p. 50. Cp. Jer. xvi. 19.

opportunities open to them. A Jew frequently became a Greek in language and in habits of life; he could not avoid being influenced by the study of Greek thought and literature. The Greek on the other hand felt himself attracted by the simple creed of the Jew, and by the comparative purity and uprightness of his conduct. Moreover, the synagogues were open to foreigners, and Jewish worship exercised something of missionary influence among the Gentiles. Hence we may conclude that although there was apparently little direct attempt to proselytise (at least before the Christian era), there existed an eager desire among the Jews of the Dispersion to convert the heathen among whom they dwelt, and indeed the Judaeo-Hellenistic literature seems in part to be inspired by the aim of commending to Gentiles the religion of Moses. The number of proselytes[1] admitted into full fellowship with Israel was probably not large; but there was apparently a considerable number of cultivated heathen who respected and admired the votaries of Judaism, and to some extent accepted its teaching[2]. The attitude of a liberal-minded Jew in regard to Gentile 'enquirers' is thus described by Josephus[3]: 'Our legislator admits all those that have a mind to observe his laws so to do, and this after a friendly manner, as esteeming *that* a true union which extends not merely to our own stock, but to those that would live after the same manner with us.' Whatever success Jewish propagandism achieved was due in part to the fact that it became a fashion, especially in the century before and after the birth of Christ, to patronise Oriental religions; but mainly perhaps to the intrinsic character of Hebrew religion. Jewish teachers

[1] 'Proselytes of righteousness,' as they were called by the later Rabbis, *i.e.* those who were circumcised and conformed completely to the Law.

[2] These would be οἱ σεβόμενοι or οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν Θεόν of the N. T. See (*e.g.*) St Lk. vii. 2 foll. (the Centurion), Acts x. (Cornelius), Acts xiii. 16, etc. These would observe the Sabbath and certain distinctions of food. They would contribute to the Temple-treasury, and make a duty of charity to the poor. Cp. Juv. *Sat.* XIV. 96 foll.

[3] *c. Apion.* II. 29.

laid stress on its rational character, as opposed to the absurdities of polytheism and idolatry. They insisted that it taught a virtuous life in a complete and satisfactory way, thus appealing to the inarticulate yearning of the Gentile heart for moral purity, for deliverance from sin, and for solace in adversity. Even the bare simplicity of the synagogue-worship and the multitudinous precepts of the ceremonial law did not present an insuperable obstacle to the advance of Judaism. Thus Josephus can exclaim with some reason: 'There is not any city of the Greeks nor yet of the barbarians whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come, and by which our fasts and lighting up of lamps, and many of our prohibitions as to food, are not observed. They also endeavour to imitate our mutual concord with one another, the charitable distribution of our goods, our diligence in our trades, and our fortitude in undergoing distresses on account of our laws; and what is most worthy of wonder, our Law has no bait of pleasure to allure men to it, but it prevails by its own force; and as God Himself pervades all the world, so hath our Law passed through all the world also[1].'

It is evident that there was a universalistic element in Judaism which, in spite of the exclusive tendency (chiefly prevalent in Palestine), was allowed to find ample scope in the Gentile world. This element becomes even more apparent in the conditions which led to the compilation of the *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom-literature)[2].

We pass on to consider another important feature of post-exilic Judaism—namely, the fact that under the shadow of

[1] *c. Apion.* II. 40. Cp. the striking testimony of Seneca quoted by Aug. *de Civ. Dei*, VI. 11: 'Usque eo sceleratissimae gentis consuetudo convaluit ut per omnes jam terras recepta sit; victi victoribus leges dederunt.'

[2] On later proselytism see Schürer, *Hist. of the Jewish People*, § 31; Hastings' *DB*, art. 'Proselyte'; Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, II. pp. 411, 439 foll.

Personal religion.

the Law there grew up a rich and deeply-rooted life of personal religion—the character and tone of which are best illustrated by the Psalter—that strange and beautiful product of an age generally reputed to be one of barren legalism. In what direction are we to look for the origin of that spirit of fervent personal piety which meets us in the book of Psalms? Doubtless the downfall of the Jewish State and the overthrow of national hopes and ambitions led to the conception of religion as the personal possession of each individual soul. The book of Deuteronomy, in enjoining the affections of love, fear and joy[1], suggested the idea that religion was an inward state of heart, and this, as we have seen, was one of the leading thoughts of the prophet Jeremiah. The earlier prophets were not concerned with the fate of the individual as such. They regarded him simply as a member of the community, with the fortunes of which his personal lot was indissolubly bound up. But Jeremiah was led, partly by his own spiritual experience, partly by the circumstances of his age, to lay special stress on personal religion. His own moral isolation forced him to reflect profoundly on the relation of the individual to God. He realised in his own life and ministry the need of personal penitence and self-surrender, the certainty that Divine grace alone could produce the *new heart* which Jahveh demanded[2]. At a time when the innocent seemed to be involved in the fate of the guilty, Jeremiah held out the hope of a conversion of the individual, and he taught that the day was coming when each soul should be held responsible for its own sin[3]. Then came the exile, when the Jews found themselves deprived of all that had hitherto made up their religion, when their sorrows drove them to seek consolation in prayer, when the absence of all external symbols and aids to devotion compelled them to

[1] Deut. vi. 5, x. 12, xii. 7, etc.

[2] See Jer. xvii. 14, xxiv. 7, xxxi. 18, xxxii. 39, 40; Lam. v. 21.

[3] Jer. xxxi. 29. Cp. Deut. xxiv. 16 (qualifying Deut. v. 9).

realise the great spiritual truths which the outward forms of worship had dimly and figuratively represented[1]. Ezekiel's teaching followed the lines laid down by Jeremiah[2]. It gave prominence to the need of personal conversion; it commended the duties of humility and submission. Thus both the Jews who returned from exile, and those — the large majority — who were 'dispersed' in Babylon and elsewhere, discovered through their sufferings the fundamental simplicity of their faith[3]. They learned that God was everywhere present as the refuge and protector of His people, and that communion with Him might sufficiently compensate them for the loss of sanctuary and sacrifice. This fact serves to explain the spirit of devotion, the religious intensity, of those who returned from Babylon. They clung in spite of much sorrowful disillusionment to the spiritual hopes and ideals of prophecy. They were in a sense other than of old a true people of God.

Naturally therefore faithful Israelites discovered in the restored worship of the Temple, and in the study of their sacred literature, a fresh channel for devotion—a treasure in the possession of which they realised that the God of their fathers was really brought *very nigh* unto them[4]. The fulfilment of the Law became to each individual an end in itself. The simple service of the synagogues—instituted after the age of Ezra or possibly earlier—helped to make religion more decidedly the possession and solace of the individual. To take part in the national worship of the Temple at Jerusalem was to devout Jews the very summit of earthly bliss, but the

[1] Examples of *prayer* become frequent in the post-exilic literature. See *e.g.* Ezra viii. 21 foll.; Dan. vi. 11, ix. 3 foll. Cp. Ps. lv. 17.

[2] See Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

[3] E. Renan, *L'Ecclésiaste*, p. 28: 'Le peuple juif est à la fois le peuple le plus religieux et celui qui a eu la religion la plus simple.' Cp. Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 418.

[4] Deut. xxx. 14.

synagogues were prized as places of instruction and edification. In them the willing soul was enabled to learn Jahveh's requirement; it could experience the blessedness of being *taught of God*[1]. Thus the actual effect of the synagogue-worship was that religion became more human and more catholic; indeed, strange as it may seem, it was rather the teaching of the synagogue than the Temple-worship that developed the religious mood which is reflected in the Psalter[2]. The Psalms exhibit a type of religion which has, on the whole, separated itself from political interests[3], having discovered in the self-manifestation of God in nature and in the Law, all that is required to nourish and satisfy faith. The faith of the Psalmists is only to a very slight extent influenced by the religious ideas which Israel may have derived from its contact with Gentilism. The Psalter is indeed best accounted for as the product of a reaction—'the reaction of old Israelitish piety against Judaism[4].' We find in it the characteristic religion taught by the prophets—a religion deeper and more simple than that which was embodied in the Law and in the *cultus*. Certainly the Psalmists display an enthusiastic devotion to the Law as the perfect revelation of God's will, and a thirst for God which finds its highest satisfaction in the solemnities of the Temple-worship; but the deepest note in their music is that of devotion to Him who manifests His holiness in the Law; and though in many cases

[1] Isai. liv. 13; John vi. 45.

[2] The Psalter as we have it was probably closed not long after the Maccabaean age. Though some of the Psalms are doubtless much more ancient, the book as a whole seems to represent the faith and piety of the Persian and Greek ages (*c.* 500—200).

[3] It is true that the Psalmists inherit the Messianic ideas of prophecy, but they seldom dwell upon the advent or achievements of a personal Messiah (see Pss. ii., lxxii., cx.). On the other hand they look for a Messianic age when Jahveh shall reign in Zion and judge Israel's foes. The whole Psalter is Messianic in the sense that it is pervaded by prophetic ideals which only find their fulfilment in Christ.

[4] Cornill, *Einleitung in das A. T.* § 41, p. 221.

the 'I' of the Psalter represents the community in its relation to God, yet we cannot mistake the voice of *individual* need and aspiration which here finds utterance. The Psalms in short owe their enduring value to the fact that they represent the response of the individual to the Divine revelation. God is brought near to the single soul; He is appealed to as its unseen judge, searching *the hearts and reins*[1], but also as the object of its confidence, its highest good, its solace, its treasure, its joy, its reward.

Three elements in the personal religion of the Psalmists deserve special attention.

Religion of the Psalmists.

First, the Psalmists' conception of Jahveh is practically the same as that held by the prophets. The prophetic ideas are reproduced and expanded—the majesty of God revealed in nature[2], His unapproachable holiness[3], His redemptive power and goodness. Further, as we might expect, the prophetic particularism to some extent reappears. The nations of heathendom are marked out for judgment[4]. Only occasionally is there a hint of 'universalism' in the wider sense[5]. But there is also a new note, characteristic perhaps of the age in which the Psalter was compiled, namely, the thought of Jahveh's relationship to the individual soul,—His compassion and lovingkindness, His particular providence. To the Psalmists God is a refuge in any trouble, a stay even in death[6]. The highest good is communion with Him[7], and the converse of the righteous Israelite with God is a pledge of the soul's uninterrupted existence through and after death. The faithful Israelite could commend his soul into Jahveh's hands, in confidence that a being whom God had so highly favoured would not utterly perish, or

[1] Cp. Pss. vii. 10, xi. 5, cxxxix. 7. Cp. Jer. xi. 20, xvii. 10, xx. 12.
[2] Pss. xxix., civ., cxlviii. [3] Ps. xcix. [4] Pss. ii., ix., lxviii.
[5] Pss. xxii., lxvii., lxxxvii.
[6] Pss. xvi.; xvii. 15; xxiii.; xlix. 15. Cp. Pss. ciii., cxlv.
[7] Ps. lxxiii.

be *cut away from* His *hand*. Apart from this belief, the Psalmists do not appear to rise above the somewhat cheerless level of the rest of the Old Testament teaching. There is no certain hint of any belief in a resurrection from death[1]. At the most there is a trustful anticipation of deliverance from death, or at any rate of protection from the penal death of the ungodly[2].

Again, the Psalter illustrates very clearly the temper which the study of the Law was calculated to produce. To the Psalmists the Law is no burden, but a cherished gift of God's grace. To study and to know it is the highest blessedness; faithful observance of it is the way of salvation. And the contemplation of the Law, while it developes that sense of personal integrity which is characteristic of several Psalms[3], also fosters that consciousness of sin, that humility (עֲנָוָה), which was a common feature of post-exilic piety[4]. We find not merely the faithful in Israel, but Israel itself, frequently described in the Psalms and in prophecy by the phrase 'the poor,' an epithet which, apart from its literal sense, implies the feeling of helplessness and spiritual need which drives man to trust in God. Indeed, the whole Jewish community, in its isolation amid heathen foes, could with good reason describe itself as 'the poor[5].' Both by the study of the Law, and by the contemplation of his national history, stained as it was by repeated sins and apostasies, the Jew was led to that poverty of spirit to which the Gospel of Christ brought a message of hope and joy.

[1] On this point see Kautzsch in *DB*, v. p. 728 a.

[2] Cp. Schultz, *O. T. Theology*, II. 387—392.

[3] *e.g.* Pss. xvii., xviii., ci. Obs. 'The inconsistency is only apparent. The assertion of integrity is relative not absolute. It is that of...the... *ḥasid*, the "godly" man, who is determined to keep well within the bounds of the covenant which is the charter of national religion, and is conscious of having done so.' Davidson in *DB*, s.v. 'Psalms, Book of.'

[4] Pss. xxxii., li. On ענוה and ענוים see Smend's remarks, pp. 446, 447.

[5] See *e.g.* Pss. ix. 18, xl. 17, lxxii. 4, lxxxii. 4, etc. Cp. Isai. xxvi. 6.

Once more, the Psalmists have a keen sense of the dignity and blessedness of the national worship at Jerusalem. It is obvious that many of the Psalms are intended for liturgical use, while many others dwell with rapture on the joy of treading the Temple-courts and participating in the sacred services. On the other hand, the prophetic doctrine that Jahveh requires obedience rather than sacrifice is emphatically repeated[1]. The Psalmists teach that contrition and prayer constitute the sacrifice which is most acceptable to God, and they have learned the lesson that if prayer is to be heard and answered, it must be offered by clean hands and with a pure heart[2].

It should perhaps be added that the problems of human life do not figure much in the Psalms, nor, on the whole, do they seem to affect faith adversely. In such a Psalm as the thirty-seventh the current ideas concerning retribution—ideas which were not seldom contradicted by actual experience—are reasserted. The same must be said of Psalms xlix. and lxxiii.[3] At the same time the thought now finds distinct expression that spiritual communion with God adequately compensates the righteous man for his undeserved tribulation and for the undeniable prosperity of the wicked.

The Psalter by no means represents the whole outcome of Israel's religious life after the exile. It represents what taken by itself might be called a one-sided development—the self-withdrawal of the Jew within the boundaries marked by his own religion. To the Psalmists religion is all in all. In the Psalter we find no impress left by the Hellenism which environed Israel. The soul lives amid the hopes and consolations which faith supplies, leaving out of sight, at least for the time,

[1] See Pss. xl., l., lxix. [2] Pss. iv., v., xv., xxiv., xxvi. 6, lxvi. 18.

[3] In these Pss. 'the sufferings of the righteous and the prosperity of the wicked are alike pronounced to be *always* only temporary, and hence to be merely a deceitful appearance' (Kautzsch).

the vicissitudes of contemporary history, and the social, moral, and religious problems presented by the actual condition of the nation and of mankind at large.

Hebrew wisdom.

In the 'Wisdom' literature (חכמה), on the other hand, we discern the effect of the contact of the Hebrew mind with the world that lay beyond the confines of Judaism.

While the priesthood after the exile occupied itself in the task of organising and elaborating the sacrificial worship which was Israel's national act of homage and devotion to Jahveh, another order of teachers came to the front—namely, the 'wise men' who, even before the exile, had formed along with the prophets and the priests a distinct though not apparently a very prominent or influential class[1]. After the restoration, however, the 'wise men' virtually took the place of the prophets as teachers of morality, but whereas the prophets had stood more or less aloof from the official exponents of Jahveh's will (the priests), the post-exilic 'Wisdom' arose in close connection with the worship and instruction of the synagogue. While the priests were necessarily engaged in the service of the sanctuary, it became customary for laymen to take part in the worship of the synagogues, and to assume the duty of giving instruction in the Law, the study and exposition of which became a task quite independent of the *cultus*. Thus arose the class of 'Scribes,' who made the study of the *torah* a profession, and when the priesthood as a class yielded more and more to the influence of Hellenism, the Scribes naturally acquired prestige as the loyal guardians of Israel's most cherished possession, and the authoritative teachers of the laity.

The 'wise men' who partly compiled from existing materials

[1] Jer. viii. 9, ix. 12, xviii. 18. Cp. Is. xxix. 14. Jeremiah speaks as if the 'wise men,' like the false prophets, held views in regard to Israel's policy which were untheocratic and worldly, and opposed to those of true prophecy.

and partly themselves contributed to the 'Wisdom' of the Hebrews, may possibly have belonged to the ranks of the Scribes[1]; but at any rate, though conversant with the Law, they seem to have been in contact with Hellenic thought, and while they took for granted the accepted doctrines of Judaism, they were more interested in questions of practical morality and in the problems of human life than in the customs and traditions of their own nation. Thus they say little or nothing of Israel's peculiar institutions, sacrificial worship and the like[2]. Their point of view may be briefly described as that of *Humanists*; in other words, they study human nature and formulate the common principles of conduct from a general and not from a nationalistic standpoint. Even the pre-exilic wisdom did not stand in any close relation to religion. The 'Wisdom' which the ancient Hebrews admired consisted in practical shrewdness and sagacity like that of Solomon, and it is significant that the wise king is honourably compared by the compiler of 1 Kings with the non-Jewish sages of the east[3]. Indeed, regarded as a distinct class the 'wise men' of Israel may be compared with the early sages of Greece, who are well described by a Greek writer as 'neither sages nor philosophers, but men of insight with a turn for legislation[4].' The Hebrew 'wise men' started with certain dogmatic presuppositions, and their method was entirely unsystematic. They confined themselves to enunciating the truths suggested by common sense and by the universal

[1] In the Mishna, contemporary scribes are always styled 'wise men.' See Schürer, div. II. vol. i. p. 315, and Jerome quoted *ib.* p. 324.

[2] Consider Prov. xv. 8, xxi. 27, which suggest the *moral* conditions of acceptable worship.

[3] 1 Kings iv. 30. Cp. Jer. xlix. 7; Obad. 8. There is some reason for thinking that Job's three friends came from Edom. See Davidson on *Job* ii. 11 (Camb. Bible).

[4] Dicaearchus ap. Diog. Laërt. I. 40: *οὔτε σοφούς, οὔτε φιλοσόφους, συνετοὺς δέ τινας καὶ νομοθετικούς.* Cp. Aug., *de civ.*, viii. 2, xviii. 25; and see Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, iii. 315 foll.; Ueberweg, *Hist. of Philosophy*, i. 26.

experience of mankind. Assuming the existence of the God who had revealed Himself to Israel, the authors of the Wisdom-literature devote themselves to expounding the ways of Providence in the history of nations and individuals, chiefly with a view to the guidance of conduct in ordinary life. If they touch upon the facts of physical nature, it is because they regard the visible creation as the sphere of a Divine self-manifestation and the instrument of Divine judgment. But the unique interest of the Wisdom-literature lies in the fact that it reflects the contact of Judaism with non-Jewish culture. The wise men recognise that wisdom is not specially confined to the chosen people. In the book of Proverbs, for instance, the very name of Israel does not occur, and the hero of the book of Job is of alien race. In fact, the sojourn of the Jews in Babylon and their dispersion in other lands revealed to them to some extent the religious and intellectual capacities of other nations. They learned in their contact with foreign culture that they were 'neither the sole children of God's love nor the exclusive recipients of His blessings[1].' In the conception of 'Wisdom' they found what has been happily called 'a middle term between the religion of Israel and the philosophy of Greece[2].' Thus the compilation of the Hebrew Wisdom-literature and its translation into Greek mark a new stage in the advance of Judaism towards the position of a universal religion[3]. Nor should it be forgotten how important an element in the preparation of the world for the Gospel was

[1] Cp. Cheyne, *Job and Solomon*, etc., pp. 117 foll. Toy (in *Enc. Bib.*, *s.v.* 'Wisdom-literature') says, 'It is to Greek influence that we must ascribe the selection of wisdom (rather than power, kindness, or holiness) as the attribute distinctively representative of God.'

[2] A. L. Moore in *Lux Mundi*, p. 85.

[3] In this connection should be noticed the great importance of the LXX. translation of the O. T. Cheyne (*op. cit.*) points out how in translating the book of Proverbs the Jew had to familiarise himself with the terminology of Greek ethics. 'The very words σοφία, φρόνησις, σύνεσις, δικαιοσύνη were those which were echoing in every lecture-room of Alexandria.'

involved in the development of the Hebrew doctrine of the Divine wisdom.

For present purposes it will suffice to touch briefly on two points, (1) the conception of wisdom in the canonical books, (2) the nature of the problems discussed in them.

(1) (*a*) Wisdom viewed subjectively as a gift divinely bestowed on man has its starting-point in *the fear of Jahveh, i.e.* in the recognition of God's will as the law of the universe, and of righteousness as His supreme requirement of man. Wisdom, broadly speaking, is *theoretic* in so far as it devotes itself to the scientific study of nature or of the laws regulating particular arts (*e.g.* husbandry, or kingship and the government of men[1]). But more important is the *practical* wisdom that regulates the ordinary dealings of men in their mutual intercourse. Wisdom is above all a *moral* quality—it is displayed in action, and the great means of acquiring it is 'instruction' or 'discipline' (מוּסָר). The motives appealed to in prescribing particular lines of conduct are appropriate to minds trained by the discipline of the Law, that is to say, they are individualistic and prudential. Earthly blessings are commended as the natural result of righteous conduct, and it cannot be said that supramundane rewards are anywhere certainly alluded to[2]. On the other hand, the teaching of the book of Proverbs is very far from being a mere appeal to self-interest. The very fact that the basal principle of wisdom is the fear of Jahveh shows that the Hebrew ideal of righteousness is not self-regarding, and it is constantly implied that earthly rewards and blessings are only to be prized in so far as they are tokens of the Divine favour and approbation[3]. Further, the book seems to rise above the purely legal standpoint when it enjoins the purifica-

[1] Isai. xxviii. 23; Prov. viii. 15.

[2] The passage Prov. xii. 28 is sometimes regarded as an exception (cp. x. 25, xi. 4, xiv. 32, xxiii. 18). But see Oehler, *O. T. Theology*, § 242.

[3] Prov. xi. 4, 28, xv. 16, xxx. 7—9.

tion of heart and temper[1], and when it inculcates actions or virtues which transcend the legal standard, *e.g.* the control of anger, readiness to overlook an offence, truthfulness, humility, self-discipline, the peaceable temper, bountifulness, compassion towards animals, pity for the misfortunes of a foe and readiness to do him good, love which *covereth all sins*[2]. Speaking generally, the book supports the teaching of the prophets in its tendency to exalt the moral over the ceremonial law; while in basing a system of ethics upon the dictates of reason and experience the writers take their stand on ground common to themselves and to the sages of other nations.

(*b*) Wisdom is not merely regarded subjectively as a gift or endowment imparted to man. There is an objective wisdom—the possession and the peculiar attribute of the Most High, yet no ordinary attribute but an actual agent in the creation of the universe. Already in Proverbs ch. viii. 22 foll. wisdom is personified as the first of created beings, the very thought of God, the plan of the universe, having a pre-mundane existence as the instrument through whose agency all things were made. In this aspect wisdom is poetically regarded as objective even in relation to God Himself. Further, wisdom is the intermediary through which Divine operations are carried on, especially the moral education and perfecting of mankind[3]. In the book of Job (ch. xxviii.) the same conception appears; indeed, the personification of wisdom marks 'the highest point to which Hebrew thought on the world rose.' 'They who attain to her and live as she directs attain to the thought of God Himself and fulfil His purpose; human thought and life coincide with or even coalesce in the divine thought and will. In Proverbs *the fear of the* LORD is the beginning of wisdom; in Job xxviii. it is all the wisdom possible to man[4].'

[1] Prov. iv. 23, vi. 18, xv. 11, xvi. 2. [2] Prov. x. 12.
[3] Prov. viii. 31; ix. 1 foll.
[4] Davidson, *The Book of Job* (Camb. Bible), p. lxii. Other passages

Thus the mediatorial functions of the Divine wisdom culminate in the moral activities of mankind.

(2) The treatment of the problem of retribution in Proverbs is in more or less close accord with the prevalent belief fostered by the Law, which associated righteousness with earthly prosperity, and suffering with sin. But through the experience of life in Palestine after the exile the Jew was often perplexed by the want of correspondence between his theory and the actual facts. In the Wisdom-literature we seem to discern a progressive effort to solve the problem raised by the anomalies of human life, and especially by the sufferings which befell the godly during a period when the Jews were burdened with the yoke of heathen domination. Accordingly in the first instance the perplexity of godly men related to the subject condition of Israel itself. The world was made, as they believed, for Israel's sake, but nevertheless the nation was given over into the hands of the heathen[1]. In process of time, however, the enquiry was transferred from the condition of Israel to the lot of the individual. An explanation was sought of the ways of Divine providence as observed in the daily experience of life. 'For the Jewish philosopher, to whom life was God, it was a necessity to harmonise God and the world[2].'

In the book of Proverbs we see reflected the teaching of the Law, which on the whole encouraged a naïve confidence in the belief that sin and suffering, righteousness and prosperity were invariably associated. The writers take it for

which personify wisdom are Ecclus. xxiv. and Wisdom vii., viii. Job speaks of the priceless value of wisdom; Prov. describes wisdom as the companion of Jahveh in the work of creation; the book of Wisdom represents wisdom as an all-pervading effluence from the Almighty, the all-powerful agent in creating and ordering the universe. Ben Sirach seems to identify wisdom with the Law.

[1] See this complaint expressed at a later time in 2 Esdr. vi. 56—59.

[2] Toy in *Enc. Bibl.*, *l.c.*

granted that the government of God, as reflected in the ordinary arrangements of human society, is righteous, and that virtue and vice meet with their proper reward even in this life. In some passages, it is true, we find hints of a deeper insight,—a suggestion that even in the case of the godly adversity may have a probationary and disciplinary value[1]; but generally speaking the authors of the book continue to repeat a view of Jahveh's providential dealings which was perpetually contradicted by facts. It may be added that Ben Sirach[2], in Ecclesiasticus, practically adopts the same point of view. The moral tone of the book is on the whole what may be called hedonistic and optimistic. It has no doctrine of a future life, and the writer evidently holds that God deals with every man in this life according to his deserts. There is much more of strong national feeling in Ben Sirach than in Proverbs. He glorifies the Law, and enumerates with pride the great worthies of his race; the deeper problems which arose from the contact of Israel with the heathen, or of the righteous with the ungodly, scarcely present themselves to his thought.

In the book of Job and in several of the Psalms we find evidence of what has been called 'an era of difficulties.' The prosperity of the wicked is a fact that admits of no contradiction; the domination of the heathen over the righteous nation was a standing instance in point, and the calamities which fell upon the chosen people continually forced the problem of retribution into notice. The hero of the book of Job is a type of the righteous servant of Jahveh plunged in what might seem to be wholly unmerited tribulation. Various solutions of the problem emerge in the book itself. On the whole the positive teaching of Job centres in two points. The book dwells, first, on the place of suffering as a probationary and purgative element in man's discipline—testing fidelity and

[1] See Prov. iii. 11, 12.

[2] The date of the book may be assumed to be between 190—170 B.C.

refining character[1]; and, secondly, it suggests the negative principle that the connection between sin and suffering is not constant and invariable, and that therefore 'no argument could be drawn from affliction and ignominy against the person who suffered it[2].' The book ends, however, by expressly confirming the legal or traditional doctrine of retribution so ardently defended by Job's three friends. The net result of the book is a forcible exposition of the moral difficulty involved in the traditional view, and a clear suggestion of its insufficiency. The writer appears to rest in the thought of the unsearchable power of God, whose ways are past finding out, yet whose mercy is over all His works.

In the book of Ecclesiastes the effort to comprehend the mysterious principles of the Divine government is finally abandoned. The writer contents himself with showing that experience is constantly at variance with the idea of visible retribution, and virtually finds refuge in an agnostic position. He maintains that trustful obedience and submission to the revealed will of God is the only possible course for man. At the same time, in the hint of judgment to come which closes the book is implied a presage, as it were, of some new self-manifestation of God, in which the riddle of human destiny will ultimately find its solution. Thus the last word of the Old Testament in regard to the problem of retribution is one of quiescence or resignation. It may, however, be fairly pointed out that the tendency to look for a solution of moral difficulties beyond the limits of this life displays itself in the doctrine of a resurrection of the godly members of the Jewish nation[3], and ultimately finds clear expression in the post-canonical literature. The doctrine of retribution tends in fact to connect itself with the Messianic expectation, and with the idea of a future

[1] This suggestion is first made by Eliphaz (Job v. 17), and is expanded by Elihu in chh. xxxii.—xxxvii.

[2] J. B. Mozley, *Essays*, vol. II. 227.

[3] Isai. xxvi. 19; Dan. xii. 2.

judgment rewarding the righteous and the ungodly members of the nation according to their deeds. It is noteworthy that Jewish eschatological doctrine is so far confined within nationalistic limits.

The book of Wisdom, the latest product of the Wisdom-literature[1], points definitely to a future life as the sphere in which the ways of God will finally be manifested. The transitory joys of wickedness are contrasted sharply with the everlasting reward that awaits the righteous[2]. It is perhaps strange that the author of Wisdom has no doctrine of a bodily resurrection, nor does he describe with any exactness the conditions of the life beyond the grave. In antagonism, apparently, to the teaching of Ecclesiastes he emphasises the certainty of moral retribution, and his view was that which finally won acceptance among the Jews. The solution of the problem involved in the inequalities of life was thus acknowledged to lie beyond the limits of this life[3].

[1] The book seems to have been composed about the middle of the first century B.C.

[2] Wisdom v. 14 foll.

[3] On the doctrine of Wisdom, its scope and history, see Mr Fairweather's art. 'Development of Doctrine,' in *DB*, v. pp. 280 foll.

CHAPTER X.

THE FINAL STAGE IN PRE-CHRISTIAN JUDAISM.

THE Maccabaean rising (167) and its issue in the triumph of Judaism mark a fresh point of departure in Jewish religious history. What Antiochus aimed at was nothing less than the abolition of all that was distinctive of Judaism, but he also hoped to encourage the spread of Hellenism within his dominions[1]. His project found supporters in Judaea itself, but the violence with which he endeavoured to carry out his purpose defeated itself, by provoking a powerful and lasting reaction among the Jews. It was indeed 'the extreme and radical character of Antiochus' attempt that saved Judaism[2].' The great mass of the Jewish people rallied to the side of the *chasidim* in their patriotic struggle for Israel's ancestral faith, and when victory finally crowned their efforts, the triumph of the Jewish arms was hailed as that of the religion of the Law. Hellenism could not be altogether banished from the soil of Palestine, but at least its influence could be successfully resisted by a new devotion to the Law, and especially to those ordinances which most definitely implied Israel's separation from the heathen world—the strict observance of the Sabbath and of the rules of ceremonial purity, etc.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 8: 'Postquam Macedones praepolluere, rex Antiochus demere superstitionem et mores Graecorum dare adnisus, quo minus taeterrimam gentem in melius mutaret, Parthorum bello prohibitus est.'

[2] Schürer, div. I. vol. i. p. 198.

Our object in this chapter is to give a sketch of Jewish religion in the stage which it finally reached during the period between the Maccabaean revolt and the opening of the Christian era.

The importance of the Law.

I. The first and most obvious consequence of the events which confirmed the Jews in the possession and practice of their religion was the exaltation of the Law to the central place in the system. The Law had by this time become fixed in a complete and permanent form, and it was reverenced as the one source of religious knowledge, the perfect embodiment of the will of God, and a binding rule of daily life[1]. In process of time other Scriptures took their place beside the Law—the books of the Prophets, including the historical books known as 'former prophets,' and the Hagiographa. The date when these later collections were first begun or finally completed is quite uncertain. All we can assert is that they existed as separate collections of sacred literature at about the close of the third century before Christ (*c.* 200), for they are mentioned together in the prologue to the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach (132 B.C.). But the books contained in these later collections (the Prophets and the Writings), though held in great and increasing veneration, seem at no time to have stood on the same level of importance as the Law. All the books were 'Holy Scriptures' (כתבי הקדש), and in the New Testament are sometimes cited as part of 'the Law[2],' but it was not supposed that they added anything material to the original and complete revelation of the Divine will contained in the Law. In fact the tendency was to value them only in so far as they did not contradict the Law.

[1] Schürer, § 25, points out that 'the age of this acknowledgment may be determined almost to the day and hour.' It dated from the occasion described in Neh. viii.—x., the solemn publication of the Law by Ezra.

[2] *e.g.* Rom. iii. 19; 1 Cor. xiv. 21; St Jo. x. 34, xii. 34, xv. 25.

Scribism.

As systematic *exegesis* was the necessary means for ascertaining the sense of the Law, the Scribes naturally came to be held in high and increasing esteem[1]. The name of honour by which they were saluted, 'Rabbi,' gradually came to signify 'teacher.' Until the fall of Jerusalem the Scribes were chiefly congregated in Judaea, but in later times we hear of their presence in Rome and in every important centre of the 'dispersion.' When the Pharisees began to be recognised as a distinct sect among the Jews (*c.* 150 B.C.) the Scribes as a rule adhered to them as being the most scrupulous observers of the Law, but probably there were Scribes who, for various reasons, chose to belong to the party of the Sadducees[2]. At any rate the Scribes were looked upon as the accredited guardians, exponents, and (to some extent) administrators of the Law. To them is due that development or expansion of the Law which was such a remarkable feature in Israel's religious life during the two centuries before Christ. The great object which the Scribes set before themselves was the adaptation of the legal requirements to all possible cases. Hence arose a whole mass of inferential teaching, based upon the written *Torah*, and resulting in an endless system of casuistry. By means of oral discussion among the Scribes, held in such centres as Jerusalem, Jamnia, or Tiberias, cases of difficulty were successively solved, and the written Law was gradually supplemented by an immense mass of oral tradition, which acquired in process of time an authority equal to that of the *Torah* itself. This oral interpretation and application of the Law led to the formation of *halachah*, or 'customary law'; and formal rules (*middoth*) were even laid down for ascertaining it. The *halachah* of the Scribes was naturally concerned for the most part with matters of ceremonial observance. Ethical teaching proper was the scope of

[1] Joseph. *Antiq.* XVII. 16. 2, calls them πατρίων ἐξηγηταὶ νομῶν. In the N. T. we hear of them as γραμμάτεις, νομικοὶ or νομοδιδάσκαλοι.

[2] This is implied in St Mk. ii. 16, St Lk. v. 30, Acts xxiii. 9.

the *haggadah* or 'legend,' by which the historical portions of the Old Testament were amplified in accordance with the ideas, or spiritual needs, of the age[1]. The oral tradition of the Scribes was finally fixed in the *Mishna* (*c.* 70 A.D.).

Systematic instruction in the Law was soon demanded as a natural consequence of the newly-awakened zeal which followed the Maccabaean rising. At Jerusalem the Temple, in other places the synagogues, were the usual centres for the exercise by the Scribes of their teaching office. But in Christian times we hear of schools, or 'houses of instruction,' in close connection with the synagogues. In these a more detailed theoretic study of the Law was encouraged, with the result that one generation handed on to another the ever-increasing mass of precepts which it was the object of every zealous Israelite to practise or at least to know.

The Scribes also naturally acted as assessors in courts of justice and occasionally presided as judges. Some even obtained seats in the Sanhedrin. And just as the sentences of the Scribes were held to be binding in private cases of casuistry, so when they gave public legal decisions their judgment was accepted as final and beyond dispute. The Law thus came to mean the *Torah together with* the precepts inferred therefrom by the learned, and piety tended inevitably to take the form of a painful legalism[2].

The Law then was of supereminent authority. Devotion to it became the very essence of religion, and exact fulfilment of its precepts the outward token of piety. Duties which belonged to the whole community—the careful observance of

[1] Edersheim remarks that 'the *halachah* might be described as the apocryphal Pentateuch, the *haggadah* as the apocryphal prophets' (*Life and Times*, etc., I. 11, note).

[2] It may be observed in passing that the temper of legalism tended to foster the growth of eschatological doctrine, for the faithful observer of the Law looked for his reward not so much in this world as in that which was to come.

feasts and the oblation of the daily sacrifice—were of course punctiliously discharged; but in the daily life of the individual also the influence of the Law was supreme, especially in the matter of ceremonial purity, to which the experience of the faithful during the Maccabaean age gave a new impulse.

The conception of God.

In regard to men's conception of God two conflicting tendencies may be observed during the period under review. On the one hand God seemed to be withdrawn by His transcendence from contact with the world. The covenant-name JAHVEH was avoided and replaced by *'Adonai*, and such titles as 'Most High,' 'God of heaven,' 'King of heaven,' 'God of the world,' came into vogue[1]. Naturally, too, a doctrine of intermediary beings was developed, the importance of which consisted in the fact that it provided a solution for the problem of evil in so far as the origin of sin could be traced to a premundane 'fall' of the angels and the consequent existence of evil angels[2]. The gods of the heathen came to be regarded as 'devils[3].' At a later time death and sin were traced to Adam, and the serpent of Gen. iii. was identified with the devil[4].

On the other hand, as the importance of the Law was more and more exaggerated, there arose a tendency to degrade the Deity to the level of a judge whose office it was to administer the Law. To the Law in New Testament times was actually ascribed pre-existence. It was even called by Akiba (*c.* 135 A.D.) the instrument by which the world was made[5]. The Law was in fact nearer to the world than the Creator, who receded from the living interest of men in proportion as their zeal for the Law increased.

As regards the observances of religion, they tended to

[1] Cp. Dan. iii. 32, iv. 23; Tob. i. 13; *Apoc. Bar.* xvii. 1, xxv. 2, etc.
[2] So the *Bk. of Enoch*, based on Gen. vi. 1. Cp. Tob. iii. 17, vi. 17.
[3] Ps. cvi. 37; cp. 1 Cor. x. 20.
[4] Wisd. i. 13, 14, ii. 23 foll.; *Apoc. Bar.* xxiii. 4; 2 Esdr. vii. 46 foll.
[5] *Pirke Aboth*, III. 14.

become a matter of strict and formal rule. We read of prayer being offered three times a day in the direction of Jerusalem[1]. Almsgiving was highly esteemed, while fasting became a customary practice[2]. The ascetic tendency culminated in the life of the Essenes, with whom ceremonial ablutions and abstinence from flesh, wine and marriage were points of obligation. Above all, the severity of the law of the Sabbath was heightened to an extravagant and even fantastic degree, though the strictness of the day does not seem to have been generally felt by ordinary Israelites as a burden[3]. In general it must be admitted that the ceremonial was exalted above the moral Law[4], and though service for reward is deprecated in a Rabbinic saying[5], yet a theory of retribution formed a part of Jewish doctrine and was elaborated in very minute detail. In short, there was undoubtedly a danger of true religion becoming stifled beneath a mass of burdensome observances. The Gospels however bear witness that there were instances in which fidelity to the Law bore noble and beautiful fruit—charity, humility, the sense of sin and of dependence on the Divine mercy.

II. The organisation and functions of the Jewish priesthood next claim our attention.

Although in process of time and owing to obvious causes the Law came to overshadow the Temple in importance, and the Scribes superseded the priests as the official teachers of religion, yet politically and socially the priests remained a powerful and influential body. They, after all, had taken the most prominent part in the restoration and re-organisation of

[1] Dan. vi. 11; Tob. iii. 11; 1 Esdr. iv. 58.

[2] See *e.g.* Dan. iv. 24, ix. 3, x. 3; Tob. i. 3, 16, xii. 8, 9, xiv. 11.

[3] See Hastings' *DB*, *s.v.* 'Sabbath' (vol. IV. pp. 320 foll.).

[4] See St Mk. vii. 10; cp. St Mt. xxiii. 16, 23 foll.

[5] Antigonus of Socho (in *Pirke Aboth*, I. 3): 'Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of reward, but be like those who do service without respect to recompense' (ap. Schürer, § 25, p. 352).

the nation; the revival of sacrificial worship had been mainly their work. Further, their unique prerogatives and hereditary privileges gave them extensive influence. They alone could offer sacrifice on behalf of the community and of each individual Israelite, and in some matters of great social importance, *e.g.* the rites, and the questions of conscience, relating to marriage and to the disease of leprosy, the office of the priests was naturally one of high authority. Again, since sacrifice could only be offered at Jerusalem, the Temple-priesthood gradually acquired considerable wealth and prestige. Apparently it was soon after the age of Ezra that the priesthood was divided into twenty-four courses, each of which took its regular turn in ministration at the Temple. The Levites who were appointed to assist them were similarly organised. The priests were maintained by a regular system of dues,—firstfruits, tithes, and other payments in kind as well as in money; and the general expenses connected with public worship were defrayed by a poll-tax levied on every male of twenty years old and upward. The amount of this tax was originally one-third of a shekel, but was eventually raised to a half-shekel (the 'didrachma' of St Matt. xvii. 24)[1]. The revenue raised by this tax sufficed to defray the expense of the daily burnt-offerings and of all other sacrifices offered on behalf of the community. Another impost was wood for fuel, which had to be regularly provided[2], the turn of different clans or families for this service being determined by lot. Besides this compulsory tribute the free-will offerings of individuals furnished a copious supply of treasure which was carefully stored in the Temple, and amounted at times to so colossal an amount as to

[1] See Neh. x. 33, 34; cp. Exod. xxx. 11—16. On the gradual growth of the system see Bp. Ryle's note on *Neh.*, *l.c.* (Camb. Bible). Vespasian obliged the Jews to pay the *didrachma* annually into the capitol at Rome. Joseph. *B. J.* VII. 6. 6.

[2] Neh. x. 34, xiii. 21. Cp. Schürer, § 24.

tempt the greed of foreign potentates[1]. Splendid gifts were occasionally made to the Temple even by Gentiles, as we gather from the letter of Pseudo-Aristeas relating how Ptolemy Philadelphus sent gifts on the occasion when he requested the High Priest to send him persons competent to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek[2].

The daily sacrifice.

The most important function of the priests was that of offering the daily sacrifice, as a representative act of worship on behalf of the whole community of Israel. The offering consisted of a yearling lamb offered at dawn and in the evening. The sacrifice was always accompanied by a meal- and drink-offering. The intermission of the daily burnt-offering—the 'perpetual offering (*tamid*)' as it was called—was regarded as a supreme calamity[3]. A special meal-offering was also daily presented in the name and at the expense of the High Priest, who himself officiated as a rule on Sabbaths and festivals[4]. The offering of the *tamid* was accompanied by instrumental music, while the congregation were assembled for prayer in the court of the Temple. A special psalm was appointed to be sung on each day of the week[5].

It is interesting to note that in accordance with the organisation of the priesthood, the whole community was likewise divided into twenty-four courses, or 'watches' (*mishmoroth*), each of which took its turn in representing the nation by attendance at the daily sacrifice. In the case of those Israelites who dwelt at a distance from the capital personal attendance was not always possible. Accordingly each course was represented by a deputation who went up to Jerusalem

[1] Such attempts to plunder were made by Heliodorus (2 Macc. iii.) and by Antiochus Epiphanes (1 Macc. i. 21 foll.).

[2] See the letter in Prof. Swete's *Introd. to the O. T. in Greek*, p. 525.

[3] Dan. viii. 11 foll., xi. 31, xii. 11; Joseph. *B. J.* VI. 2. 1.

[4] Lev. vi. 12—16.

[5] For a fine description of the daily service see Ecclus. l. 11 foll.

and 'assisted' at the daily services during one week[1]. The rest of those who belonged to the course made arrangements to meet in some convenient synagogue, and engaged in prayer and the reading of Scripture while the deputation was on duty at the Temple. Thus the *tamid* became in a real sense a national service.

III. The development of Jewish eschatology was closely connected both with the newly-awakened zeal for the Law and with the political situation in which the Jews found themselves placed during and after the Maccabaean rising.

Influence of the Law.

On the one hand the Law encouraged those who faithfully observed its precepts by the prospect of a future reward; and in view of the actual situation, so full of difficulty and distress, in which the devout members of the nation were involved, the tendency arose to push the solution of the problem of retribution beyond the limits of this present life. As a matter of fact the cause of the Law for which martyrs and saints laid down their lives ultimately triumphed; but many of those who had been the most ardent champions of their faith perished without reaping the expected fruit of their toils and sufferings. Hence arose the belief that a resurrection of pious Israelites to take part in the glories of the Messianic age could alone satisfy the instinct of justice. In another life devotion to the Law would surely meet with an appropriate recompense.

The political situation 175–63 B.C.

The political situation also did much to foster the growth and development of Messianic ideas. When Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) succeeded to the Syrian throne (175 B.C.), the strife between Judaism and Hellenism in Palestine had almost reached its climax. Jason, who in 174 contrived by bribery and intrigue to oust his brother Onias III from the high-priesthood, was a

[1] This body of attendants was called *Ma'amâd*, 'a station.' See Schürer, § 24, for details.

zealous votary of Greek customs and ideas. Indeed, the proceedings of Jason and his successor Menelaus led to a condition of things in Judaea scarcely distinguishable from civil war. The forcible intervention of Antiochus in the religious disputes of the Jews (170) was the prelude to a stubborn attempt on his part to abolish Judaism altogether (168). The erection of an altar to Zeus Olympios upon the great altar of burnt-offering, the introduction of Pagan ceremonies and the persecution of all who adhered to their ancestral faith, kindled into flame the patriotic ardour of the *ḥasidim* headed by the priest Mattathias. The actual course of the struggle has been already briefly traced in a former volume[1]. It may suffice to recall the fact that three years elapsed before the Jews could reap the fruits of their success; the dedication of the Temple took place in the year 165. In 161 the great Judas fell in battle. His brother Jonathan had no sooner secured the position of leadership than he chose to involve himself in the dynastic quarrels of the kings of Syria. But in 142, Simon, the last surviving son of Mattathias, succeeded in making a treaty with Demetrius II, and secured for himself the dignity of an independent prince. Thus Hellenism was finally overcome, and the cherished hopes of Jewish patriotism were fulfilled. John Hyrcanus (135—105) largely extended the territory claimed by the Jewish State. His successor, Aristobulus I, even assumed the title of 'King of Judaea.'

Pharisees and Sadducees.

The rise of the Hasmonaean family, however, and the constitution of Judaea as an independent secular State, while it satisfied the patriotic aspirations of the Jews, was by no means the consummation aimed at by that party of loyalists (*ḥasidim*) whose devotion to the Law had made them the soul of the resistance to the power of Syria. The leaders of this party had succeeded

[1] *A Short History of the Hebrews*, pp. 259 foll.

in obtaining the high-priesthood, and even regal dignity; but what these patriots together with the great mass of their co-religionists desired, was a theocratic republic, whereas the Hasmonaean supremacy virtually represented a secular monarchy. It is to the practical perception of this fact that we may most reasonably attribute the rise of the distinct parties of the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Pharisees[1] were the spiritual successors of the *ḥasidim* who resisted the aggressions of Hellenism. They clung to the Law and to the traditions which had grown up in connection with it, especially to those ordinances of ceremonial purity which served to protect the racial distinctness of the Jew amid the pollutions of heathendom. Pharisaism naturally found its most effective support in the learned labours of the Scribes, who regarded the growing secularity of the Hasmonaean princes with aversion and distrust. This feeling came to a head at the moment when Alexander Jannaeus (104) openly joined the rival party of the Sadducees[2], who in their own interests encouraged the secular ambitions of the Hasmonaean family and instinctively dreaded the democratic sympathies of the Scribes. A popular revolt against Jannaeus, which was suppressed under circumstances of merciless cruelty, further embittered the antagonism of the rival sects; and although Salome Alexandra (78), the successor of Jannaeus, came to terms with the Pharisees, it is evident that the hopes and aims of this party were in the long run incompatible with the aspirations of the reigning family. When, finally, after a troubled interval of about fifteen years, the power of Rome intervened in the affairs of Syria (63), the Pharisees found themselves no nearer the realisation of their hopes. The yoke of the mighty heathen empire was rivetted on the neck of the Jewish people, and patriotism could only set itself more ardently than ever to long and wait for the

[1] *i.e.* 'separatists' (פרושים).
[2] *i.e.* the priestly descendants of Zadok.

inauguration of that Messianic age which was destined, as men believed, to bring about the redemption of Israel and the overthrow of its heathen oppressors. It is the hopes, fears, and aspirations of the period we have thus summarily sketched which find their expression in the apocalyptic writings of the two centuries immediately preceding the Christian era. In this strange and fascinating literature we find reflected those religious and political ideas which mainly moulded the temper of the later Judaism, and which either nerved men for a life-and-death struggle with the Roman power, or impelled them to seek for satisfaction in Christianity.

Jewish Apocalypse.

The theme of Hebrew prophecy had been the exaltation of Jahveh—His sovereignty and that of His chosen people over the nations of the world. Zion was destined to be the metropolis of nations, where, as upon an earthly throne, God should reign over the heathen. But the hope of supremacy was continually deferred, and Israel was constantly called upon to suffer the pain of disillusionment. During the period of the Persian and Egyptian domination the hope of Israel in its older form was quite in abeyance; in the stress of the Maccabaean struggle, however, it sprang to fresh and intense life. The newly-awakened conviction that the purpose of Jahveh would ultimately triumph, and that Israel's religion and nationality could never perish, kindled and strengthened the courage of those who took the lead in bidding defiance to Hellenism. In the study of the ancient ideals of prophecy the contemplative found comfort, the active-minded inspiration and strength. The brighter future which prophecy had anticipated would be realised, not, as Isaiah had imagined, in the near future, but in a new age, 'a world to come,' in which the destiny of nations and individual men would be finally determined. The glories of the Messianic kingdom were more and more closely connected with the advent of a supramundane order of things. Thus Messianic doctrine of the older type developed into

apocalypse, which concerned itself not so much with the present situation as with the future destiny of Israel and of the nations. The details of Messianic prediction were developed, just as the Law had been developed, by a species of Haggadic exegesis (*midrash*), and the essentially poetical imagery of prophecy became hardened into learned dogma[1].

The book of Daniel.

The Maccabaean victory, as might have been expected, only inflamed the passionate hopes which had sustained the Jews under the pressure of the conflict with Syria, and we see the firstfruits of the newly-kindled ardour of patriotism in the visions of the book of Daniel—visions of a liberated and regenerated Israel, of the world-power humiliated and crushed, of the saints of the Most High raised from death to share in the glories of the Messianic kingdom. The influence of this remarkable book on the *form* henceforth assumed by Messianic prophecy can scarcely be exaggerated. It is the first specimen of a type of literature which was characteristic of the entire epoch now under consideration[2]. The Jewish 'apocalyptic' literature upheld before the eyes of the nation a prospect to which it clung even in the dark and depressing period when the Roman power had firmly established itself in Palestine; it gave to patriots ideals which inspired them in their vain conflict with the might of the empire; it encouraged the learned to investigate the signs of an approaching end or crisis, which was destined to usher in the age of the Messiah. In their exposition of the prophetic oracles the Jewish teachers were entirely dominated by the supreme interest of the time—the longing for deliverance from the yoke of the foreigner. Anything like rational exegesis was discarded; by a process of

[1] See Schürer, § 29 [E. T. div. II. vol. ii. pp. 134 foll.]. A useful sketch of later Jewish eschatology will be found in Mr H. St J. Thackeray's book, *The Relation of St Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought*, ch. v.

[2] Other O. T. passages of the same 'apocalyptic' type are Isai. xxiv.—xxvii., the book of Joel, and Zech. xii.—xiv.

actually counting the letters of the Hebrew text (*gematria*), all sorts of cryptic ideas and predictions were discovered hidden beneath the letter of the Scriptural books.

Apocalyptic writings.

The series of writings of which Daniel is the only canonical specimen are 'apocalyptic' in the sense that the writers one and all clothe the hopes and ideas of their contemporaries in the form of *revelations* made to some famous worthy of a former age. Speaking generally, they predict a speedy intervention of Jahveh, and endeavour to forecast the precise period of its occurrence, with the object of confirming faith in the glorious future of Israel, and sustaining hope under the pressure of disaster and disappointment. The most important books for the purposes of a history of Israel's religion are the following: the *Book of Enoch*, the oldest parts of which may have been written between 170—100 B.C.; the *Psalms of Solomon*, composed during the period when the Romans were establishing their power in Syria (70—40 B.C.); and certain portions of the *Sibylline Oracles*—a curious propagandist product of Hellenistic Judaism—namely, those which belong to the middle of the second century B.C. Various books included among the Old Testament Apocrypha also reflect more or less distinctly the eschatological ideas of the pre-Christian era, notably the book of Tobit and the book of Judith[1]. To a later period, after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., belong the book of Baruch, the *Apocalypse of Baruch*, the Second book of Esdras, the Second book of the Maccabees[2]. Intermediate writings, which apparently date from the first half of the first

[1] On the dates of these books see Cornill's *Einleitung in das A.T.* pp. 348–9. He suggests the following dates: *Sibyll. Orac.* iii. 97—807, *circa* 140 B.C.; Judith, *c.* 130 B.C.; Tobit, *c.* 110 B.C.; *Pss. Sol.*, *c.* 63—37 B.C.; *Sibyll. Orac.* iii. 36—92, *c.* 43—30 B.C. See also the art. 'Apocalyptic Literature' by Dr Charles in *Encyc. Bib.*

[2] The *Apoc. Bar.* and 2 (or 4) Esdras seem to belong to the time of Domitian (81—96 A.D.).

century A.D., are the *Assumption of Moses* and the *Ascension of Isaiah.*

Teaching of these books.

One remarkable feature of these books, or, to speak more strictly, of their most ancient portions, is that the figure of the Messiah is either absent or withdrawn into the background. The author of Israel's deliverance is Jahveh Himself. In the passage Dan. vii. 13, for instance, the context plainly shows that the writer is predicting not the advent of a personal Messiah, but the inauguration of a kingdom of the saints which in comparison with the barbarous world-powers that precede it wears the aspect of humanity. The figures of the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the horned beast (vii. 3—9) are followed by the appearance in glory of one *like a son of man.* It is true that this expression was afterwards interpreted to mean a personal Messiah, *e.g.* in the so-called 'similitudes' of *Enoch.* But in its original context it seems undoubtedly to denote the Jewish people on whose religion Antiochus Epiphanes (the 'little horn' of vii. 8) was waging war. The Messianic idea is present, but its form is vague and undefined. In fact, the most characteristic ideas pervading these books are those (1) of Israel's supremacy over the nations, and (2) of a retribution awaiting both the righteous and the ungodly (*i.e.* the heathen oppressors of Israel, and those Israelites who, by open apostasy or personal iniquity, cut themselves off from the holy community).

If, however, the later apocryphal and apocalyptic literature be surveyed *as a whole,* its eschatological teaching may be summarised as follows:

(1) In the first place it is noteworthy that the authors of these writings concern themselves with *universal* and not merely *national* history[1]. For them the history of the world

[1] Thus Jerome *ad Paulin.* 14 speaks of Daniel as 'temporum conscius et totius mundi φιλιστωρ.'

divides itself into two periods: *the present age* of distress, sin and imperfection (העלם הזה), and *the world to come* (העלם הבא), a period of bliss and perfection[1]. The writers regard the present age as already drawing towards its close. The world, they believe, has entered, or is about to enter, on *the latter days*, and the judgment which is appointed to usher in 'the world to come' is already close at hand[2]. In their account of the world to come the writers to some extent diverge. Some (*e.g.* the authors of Daniel, *Psalms of Solomon*, *Enoch*) apparently identify it with the age of Messiah; others (*e.g.* 2 Esdras) regard the Messianic kingdom as immediately preceding the age to come. They agree, however, in representing the period of transition from one age to the other as a time of 'travail' and distress[3].

(2) In any case the revelation of the Messiah *precedes* the dawn of the age to come. In their representations of the Messiah the apocalyptic writers freely reproduce the phraseology current in canonical prophecy. The Messiah is called 'the Son of David,' 'the King of Israel,' 'the Son of man[4],' even 'Son of God' ('My Son')[5]. But He is essentially a *human* and mortal being[6], righteous and holy and uniquely endowed with the spirit of wisdom and might[7]. Some held that the Messiah would be born, as Micah (v. 1) had predicted,

[1] Cp. St Mt. xii. 32; St Lk. x. 34.

[2] Hence the phrase *ἐσχάται ἡμέραι, ὕστεροι καιροί* in N. T. See James v. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 1. Cp. 1 Cor. x. 11, and Westcott on Heb. i. 2.

[3] Cp. St Mt. xxiv. 8 *ὠδῖνες* (Heb. חֻבְלֵי הַמָּשִׁיחַ).

[4] See *Pss. Sol.* xvii. 23; *Enoch* xlvi. 1—4.

[5] 2 Esdr. vii. 28, 29, xiii. 32, 37; *Enoch* cv. 2.

[6] Cp. 2 Esdr. vii. 29. Naturally the figure of the Messiah tended to become superhuman, but the opposition to Christianity during the first century A.D. impelled the Jews to insist on His *humanity*. Cp. Just. *Dial. c. Tryph.* 49: *καὶ γὰρ πάντες ἡμεῖς τὸν Χριστὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐξ ἀνθρώπων προσδοκῶμεν γενήσεσθαι.*

[7] *Pss. Sol.* xvii. 24 foll.

at Bethlehem. According to others, He would appear suddenly and mysteriously, none should know whence[1]. Meanwhile He was concealed in heaven till the appointed time of His manifestation (ἀποκάλυψις, παρουσία, ἔλευσις)[2]. He was also conceived as *pre-existent* in the sense that His manifestation was an event predestined in the counsels of God. The *time* of His appearing,—'the fulness of time,'—was predetermined by God though concealed from men. Hence, to study 'the signs of the times' and to reckon by elaborate calculations the date of Messiah's manifestation, was a leading aim of the apocalyptic writers. Such signs were described by them in imagery derived from the prophetical books. Messiah's coming, they teach, is to be preceded by a period of tribulation and perplexity ('birth pangs'), during which the world will be harassed by war, by internecine quarrels in families, by pestilence and famine, and by the frequent appearance of false Messiahs. Fearful signs and omens will appear in heaven; the sun and moon will be darkened; apparitions of swords or armies will be seen in the sky[3]. On earth there will be a general dissolution of moral ties and restraints; sin and violence will abound; apostasy from the faith will be a common occurrence; loyal and righteous Israelites will be mercilessly persecuted. The final 'sign' before Messiah's advent is to be the return of the prophet Elijah, his mission being either to restore peace and order on the earth, or (as many held) to anoint the Messiah for His appointed work[4].

(3) The task assigned to the Messiah was variously conceived by different writers. According to the older type of

[1] 2 Esdr. xiii. 52. Cp. St John vii. 27.

[2] 2 Esdr. xii. 32, xiii. 26. Cp. *Enoch* xlviii. 6, lxii. 7, and see Acts vii. 52.

[3] See Dan. xii. 1; 2 Esdr. v. 1—12, vi. 24, ix. 6 foll., xiii. 31 foll.; *Apoc. Bar.* xxv., lxx. 2 foll.; *Orac. Sib.* iii. 796 foll.; *Ass. Mos.* x.

[4] Cp. Just. *Dial. c. Tryph.* 8. Other prophets are occasionally spoken of as forerunners of Messiah; see St Mt. xvi. 14 (Jeremias); St Jo. i. 21, vi. 14, vii. 40 ('the Prophet' of Deut. xviii. 15).

teaching He was expected in the first place to overthrow the ungodly powers whose yoke pressed so heavily on Israel, and next to liberate the chosen people from their oppressors, to bring back all who were captives or dispersed among the heathen, to set up once more the throne of David and to 'restore the kingdom' to Israel,—in other words, to give the Jews victory and domination over their enemies[1]. The thought of a spiritual regeneration of Israel through forgiveness of the sins and sanctification of the hearts of the people, though subordinate, is not altogether absent[2]. Indeed, the idea appears somewhat later that the people's repentance and fulfilment of the Law is the necessary preparation for manifestation of the Messiah[3]. In regard to the heathen, some hope of their ultimate conversion and submission to the rule of the Messiah occasionally emerges in the earlier literature[4].

(4) Touching the *duration* of the Messianic kingdom there is a certain divergence of view. The earlier writers, *e.g.* the authors of Daniel and of the *Psalms of Solomon*, appear to regard the peaceful rule of the Christ as destined to endure for ever[5]. In later writings it is conceived as limited in duration to 400, 600, or 1000 years[6]. It is with the older view that the doctrine of the resurrection was usually connected. At the manifestation of Messiah the faithful saints and martyrs of Israel who had already perished were to be raised from the dead and called to participate in the glories of the Messianic kingdom[7]. But in process of time the view

[1] *Enoch* xc. 16—18; 2 Esdr. vi. 19; xii. 32 foll.; Tob. xiii. 10; *Apoc. Bar.* lxxii.; 2 Macc. ii. 18; Bar. iv. 36 foll. Cp. Dan. ii. 44; Acts i. 6.

[2] *Pss. Sol.* xvii. 28 foll.; *Enoch* xc. 32.

[3] Cp. Schürer, div. II. vol. i. p. 163.

[4] See Tob. xiv. 6, 7; *Pss. Sol.* xvii. 32 foll.; *Enoch* xc. 30.

[5] Dan. vii. 27; *Pss. Sol.* xvii. 4.

[6] 2 Esdr. vii. 28; cp. Rev. xx. 4—6. In *Enoch* the language is more vague (xci. 13, 14, xcvi. 8).

[7] Dan. xii. 2, 13; *Enoch* xci. 10, xcii. 3, ciii. 4; *Pss. Sol.* iii. 16, xiv. 2; 2 Macc. VII. 9.

prevailed that the kingdom was itself only a stage in the world's history—a kind of prelude to the 'age to come' and not in itself final. At the close of the peaceful reign of Messiah a last conflict was expected to take place. Satan, hitherto bound in *She'ol*[1], was to be let loose; the hostile armies of the heathen would encompass Jerusalem, but only to be overthrown by the prowess of Messiah[2] or by the direct intervention of God Himself, and thrust with Satan into Gehenna. At this point the *general resurrection* both of the righteous and of the ungodly was expected to take place, Jahveh Himself acting as judge and casting the ungodly into hell[3]. It is to be remarked, however, that the opinion of the apocalyptists is not uniform on this subject. Some speak of a resurrection of the *righteous only*[4], others of a double resurrection,—the first a resurrection of pious Israelites called to share in the Messianic glories, the second a general resurrection of all men, godly or ungodly, followed by a judgment of individuals according to their works[5]. This view also seems to underlie certain passages of the Apocalypse[6].

(5) This general resurrection and final judgment were regarded as inaugurating 'the age to come'—the eternal reign of God, 'the kingdom of heaven[7].' There would be *a new heaven and a new earth*[8], a 'new Jerusalem[9]' in which all who had submitted to Jahveh should have their part. The nature of

[1] Cp. Isai. xxiv. 21, 22.

[2] *Pss. Sol.* xvii. 25 foll.; *Apoc. Bar.* xxxix. 7; 2 Esdr. xii. 32.

[3] *Apoc. Bar.* xxx. 1, xliv. 15, li. 2—6; 2 Esdr. vi. 18, vii. 32 foll.; *Enoch* xc. 20 foll.

[4] *Pss. Sol.* iii. 16, xiv. 2 foll.; 2 Macc. vii. 14. So the Pharisees apparently believed (Joseph. *Antiq.* XVIII. 1. 3).

[5] *Apoc. Bar.* l. foll.; 2 Esdr. vii. 32; *Enoch* li. Cp. Dan. xii. 1.

[6] Rev. xx.

[7] *Pss. Sol.* xvii. 4.

[8] Isai. lxv. 17. See reff. in Swete, *The Apocalypse of St John*, p. 274.

[9] *Enoch* xc. 28, 29; 2 Esdr. vii. 26, xiii. 36; *Apoc. Bar.* xxxii. 2; cp. Rev. xxi. 2, 10.

the future state of bliss was described in ancient prophetic imagery as a feast[1], or in less materialistic fashion as a restoration of Paradise with its undying tree of life[2].

It will have appeared that the later eschatology of the Jews was not altogether distinct or free from contradictions. The imagery of the ancient prophets was many-sided and capable of expansion in different directions. But whatever may have been the character of the popular hopes on this subject, there is no doubt that they exercised a most potent influence, and Josephus is doubtless justified in saying that 'what did most incite the Jews to undertake the war [against Rome] was an ambiguous oracle found in their sacred writings to the effect that about that time one from their country should become governor of the world[3].' To these vague hopes the Pharisees clung tenaciously. The Sadducees on the other hand were indifferent. They rejected the doctrines of the resurrection and of angels, not because these found no support in the Law, but because they were closely connected with expectations the fulfilment of which seemed certain to involve the extinction of Jewish independence.

The doctrine of a *suffering Messiah* is, it will have been noticed, conspicuously absent from the current Jewish eschatology of this epoch. There is some doubtful evidence that the idea was not altogether strange to the Jewish controversialists of the early Christian period[4], but there is no reason

[1] See Isai. xxv. 6 foll.

[2] *Enoch* xxv. 4, 5, etc.; *Apoc. Bar.* li. 7—14; 2 Esdr. viii. 52.

[3] *B. J.* vi. 5. 4. Cp. Tac. *Hist.* v. 13; Suet. *Vesp.* 4.

[4] See for instance the admissions of Trypho in Justin's *Dial. c. Tryph.* cc. 68, 89, 90. Dr Stanton in *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, p. 123, thinks that 'far too much has been made' of Trypho's language, which probably 'is simply a literary device of Justin's in setting forth his argument.' In 2 Esdr. vii. 29 the death of God's 'son Christ' has evidently no relation to the Christian doctrine of atonement. Messiah dies after a long and blissful reign of 400 years. See more in Stanton, *l.c.*, and the same writer's article in Hastings' *DB*, *s.v.* 'Messiah.'

to suppose that it ever became a prevalent or widely-accepted view among the Jews. This we should certainly infer not only from the silence of the extra-canonical writings, but also from the fact that our Lord's disciples were unable to understand His predictions on the subject, and that they found in Jewish 'repugnance to such an idea the greatest difficulty they had to encounter in preaching to their countrymen[1].' In fact, at the opening of the Christian era the Messianic hope of Israel meets us in a completely secularised form. Even the spiritual ideas connected with it by the writers of the *Psalms of Solomon* seem to have faded from the minds of men. The dominant thought connected with the advent of Messiah was that of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel[2]. The Messiah for whom the Jews in Palestine waited was a victorious warrior and deliverer, but the thought of his personal glory was, as a rule, overshadowed by glowing anticipations of Israel's coming reunion and exaltation. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ could alone give substance and reality to the forgotten ideals of prophecy; only in His Person and work could they be perfectly and harmoniously combined.

[1] Stanton, *op. cit.* p. 124.

[2] Acts i. 6. Cp. Edersheim, *Life and Times*, etc., I. pp. 78 foll.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CONSUMMATION IN JESUS CHRIST.

THERE are two elements in the religion of the Hebrews which are specially consistent with its claim to be a religion of revelation.

First, we note the persistency of its upward movement. Throughout the Old Testament, as F. D. Maurice has observed, 'revelation, or the declaration of God's mind and will—of God Himself—to man, is assumed as the ground of action and history and knowledge.' Jewish religion became sterile and unspiritual in proportion as this conviction was weakened, and men substituted 'words for realities, faith in notions for faith in God[1].' Judaism in the days of the true Messiah forgot the witness borne by its own wonderful past to the existence and presence in history of *the living God*—of a Deity whose covenant-name in itself implied the continuity and progressiveness of revelation, the freedom of the Divine Nature to manifest itself in deeds of grace and power and in the spiritual education of mankind. In Hebrew religion, however, as its story is unfolded to us in the Old Testament, there is a continual and unmistakeable advance from what is natural to what is spiritual, from what is typical to what is true, from

Hebrew religion progressive.

[1] F. D. Maurice, *The Religions of the World*, pt. II. lect. i.

what is rudimentary to what is perfect[1]. Some force is manifestly at work, guiding the evolution of religious thought in one fixed direction and tending perpetually to lift the nation above the level of its surroundings. It is no merely natural process of development that culminates in the faith of men like the Psalmists or the later Isaiah. Most unanswerably has it been urged that 'the more nearly we can ally the early conditions of Israel to those of Arabian nomads, the more delicate and rare becomes our apprehension of that Divine relationship which, by its perpetual pressure, lifted Israel to its marvellous supremacy, and which, by its absence, left the Arabian to be what he is to-day[2].' The primitive civilisation of Babylonia was, as we now know, of a refined and even in some respects noble type—superior, some would claim, in the ethical conceptions which lay at its root, to that of Israel itself[3]. But the fact remains that the advance of moral and religious ideas in Babylonia was completely arrested some two thousand years before Christ, while those of Israel were taken up, as vital and expansive principles, by Christianity.

A religion of prophecy.

Another distinctive feature of Hebrew religion is the spirit of prophecy. The Old Testament everywhere assumes that God stands in a special relationship to the chosen people, and that He has manifested Himself through the agency of individual men whom He has endowed with the power to apprehend, at least in part, the mystery of His ways and of His will. *By divers portions and in divers manners*, at times and seasons of His own appointment, He

[1] Iren. *c. Haer.* IV. 14. 3: 'Facile autem ad idola revertentem populum erudiebat, per multas vocationes praestruens eos perseverare et servire Deo; per ea quae erant secunda, ad prima vocans, hoc est, per typica ad vera; et per temporalia ad aeterna; et per carnalia ad spiritalia; et per terrena ad caelestia.'

[2] H. S. Holland in *Lux Mundi*, p. 44.

[3] See F. Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible*, esp. lect. ii. [ed. C. H. W. Johns, M.A.].

has revealed His purpose, preparing the world for the message which was finally disclosed *in His Son*. Although, therefore, historical criticism has enabled us to trace clearly-marked stages in the history of Hebrew religion, we need always to remember that Israel's teachers and leaders were for the most part conscious organs of the Divine Spirit, who guided them to see further and to think more deeply than their contemporaries, and revealed to them as they were able to bear it a vision of things to come. The advance of Hebrew thought is a supremely interesting subject of study; but *a priori* considerations of what 'must have been' or 'cannot have been' must be strictly controlled when we are dealing with that which bears such obvious marks of being a Divine revelation. It is unwise and unsafe to assume, as criticism is sometimes apt to do, that our knowledge supplies us with an adequate criterion for testing the spiritual capacity of the prophets of Israel, or that we can accurately determine what was, or was not, within the range of their spiritual vision[1]. At the same time Christians are concerned to maintain that regarded *as a whole*, whatever may have been the precise order or method observed in the Divine self-disclosure, the Old Testament is the record of a progressive revelation; that in its entirety it may fairly be described as a vast prophecy of a future state of things, and that the history of Hebrew religion, like that of all other evolutionary movements known to us, finds its interpretation in the end towards which it was guided from the first[2].

The history, then, of the Hebrews was a progressive preparation for the Gospel; the prophets were inspired to lay

[1] See an interesting passage in Dr Driver's *LOT* (ed. 6), p. 306.

[2] R. C. Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. xxviii.: 'If evolutionary thought has taught us anything, it has taught us not to exclude the end, *ex hypothesi*, when we want to understand the true nature of the beginning, but rather to recognise to how large an extent the beginning finds its true interpretation in the end.'

hold of the principles at work in the history, to proclaim their tendency and to forecast their issue; the Law was at once a discipline of mind and character, and a typical presentation of truths yet to be disclosed. In a rudimentary form a theocracy was actually established on earth by Moses,—a visible kingdom in whose chequered history prophecy gradually recognised the lineaments of the kingdom of heaven revealed by Jesus Christ. The course of the history brought to light the spiritual and moral needs of Israel; the voice of prophecy kept alive the hope that those needs would be supplied. The history bore unfailing witness to the purpose and providence of Israel's God; prophecy pointed steadily to a time when God Himself should be all in all to His people; when His abiding presence in their midst should be the crown of their desires and the all-sufficient answer to their prayers. And while prophecy was a kind of inspired commentary on the history of Israel and served, like *a lamp shining in a dark place*[1], to sustain faith during the long ages of preparation for the Messiah, the Law was a discipline,—or in St Paul's phrase *a tutor*[2],—leading men to the school of Christ. Finally, the spiritual experience of devout Israelites, reflected in the sacred poetry and in the Wisdom-literature of the Old Testament, led them to expect, in answer to their yearnings and questionings, just such a manifestation of *grace and truth* as actually *came by Jesus Christ*[3].

In order to obtain a comprehensive view of the different ways in which Hebrew religion finds its consummation in Christ, it may be well to follow the line of thought suggested by the threefold division of the Hebrew canon, and to review in broad outline the elements contributed severally by Prophecy, by the Law, and by spiritual experience to the religious education of the Jewish people.

[1] 2 Pet. i. 19.
[2] Gal. iii. 24, R.V.
[3] St John i. 17.

I. It is natural to speak first of Prophecy. The ideals of Hebrew prophecy were manifold; they varied with changing circumstances; they were moulded and coloured by prevalent historical conditions; they were not always capable of being mutually adjusted and harmonised[1]. At an early period the figure of the Messianic king was brought into prominence; at another, the righteous servant of Jahveh; at another, a holy community hallowed by the indwelling presence of God; at another, a kingdom of *the saints of the Most High*. The hope of a Davidic king revived after the Maccabaean struggle, and in proportion as it did so the character and functions of the expected Messiah became more highly idealised, while at the same time His figure became more closely identified with the nationalistic aspirations of the Jews. But there is one keynote in prophecy which never fails: namely, the thought of a redemption wrought by Jahveh Himself and issuing in the triumphant fulfilment of His purpose for Israel. This fundamental idea was involved in Jahveh's relationship to Israel and it gives unity to the different ideals of prophecy. God Himself the author of salvation, overcoming evil, bringing in everlasting righteousness and establishing His kingdom—this is the most characteristic message of the Old Testament, and, indeed, the proof of its unique inspiration as a book lies in the fact that with a persistency unparalleled in any other literature it witnesses to God and leads to God[2].

The fulfilment of prophecy.

We find in Hebrew prophecy four leading conceptions of the method and issues of this Divine act of salvation.

[1] Dr Edersheim well remarks, 'All prophecy, in the nature of it, presents but *disjecta membra*, and it almost seems as if we had to take our stand in the prophet's valley of vision (Ezek. xxxvii.), waiting till, at the bidding of the Lord, the scattered bones should be joined into a body, to which the breath of the Spirit would give life' (*Life and Times*, etc., vol. I. p. 171).

[2] This thought is suggested by the Bp. of Ripon in his *Introd. to the Study of the Scriptures* (*Temple Bible*), ch. ix.

i. The prophets foretell a personal advent of Jahveh to be the judge and saviour of His people. This conception was doubtless suggested by the events of the exodus. Moses and his successors were guided to discern the true significance of those events. They recognised in the deliverance to which Israel owed its national existence the action of a God gracious, powerful and righteous; in the experience of the wilderness they learned His forbearance, tenderness and readiness to forgive; in the conquest of Palestine they realised His incomparable might and the constancy of His purpose of grace for Israel. From the conviction thus gained that they were a *people saved by Jahveh*[1], arose the confidence that the Divine purpose would be accomplished: that in *the day of the* LORD Israel would be delivered from its foes, purified from sin, and see in its ideal glory and completeness the salvation of God. There was no doubt an element of delusion and error in the popular form assumed by this belief; but religious men cherished more spiritual ideas of the expected theophany, and made it the ground of passionate appeal: *O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence...to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence*[2]. It was this expectation, elaborated in peculiar and sometimes fantastic imagery, which was a principal theme of the later apocalyptic literature.

ii. The prophets believed that the goal of Israel's history was the establishment on earth of a kingdom of God. The polity organised by Moses had given visible embodiment to this idea, and it gained substance and vividness when the monarchy was inaugurated by Samuel. The hopes that are called 'Messianic' in the strict sense connect themselves with the house of David. In the person of David the monarch was taken into a new relationship with Jahveh as His servant

[1] Deut. xxxiii. 29. [2] Isai. lxiv. 1.

and His 'son'—a title which really belonged to Israel itself, but which when transferred to the king acquired a deeper significance[1]. The true 'son' of Jahveh was not the king as such, but the king regarded as a righteous and God-fearing ruler,—the king equipped for his functions by Jahveh's Spirit and exercising authority in His Name[2]. In a word, the 'sonship' of the monarch consists in his moral affinity with Israel's Divine king. The theocracy, even in its earthly embodiment, is seen to have a spiritual character and purpose; as the chosen people of God, Israel is called to holiness and is entrusted with a religious mission to the world. And although the ideal suggested by the character of David and the glories of Solomon's reign was scarcely ever realised in fact by their successors, the hope of Israel was permanently centred in a future ruler who should fulfil the Divine purpose implied in Israel's election, who should rule in righteousness and enlarge the borders of the kingdom until it embraced, as fellow-subjects and fellow-worshippers with Israel, all the nations of the earth.

iii. The conception of the kingdom of God thus tended more and more definitely to connect itself with an individual person through and in whom it would be established. Earlier prophets conceived the Messiah as an ideal king, devoted to Jahveh's service and ruling as His son and representative. In days when monarchy had fallen into dishonour, the vision of a king yielded to that of a 'servant of Jahveh' through whose ministry and sufferings the mission of Israel would be accomplished. In the holy innocence of his life, in the prophetic

[1] The notion of divine 'fatherhood' among the primitive Semites probably had purely physical associations (Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, pp. 41 foll.). As applied to Israel, the title 'son' implies a moral relationship to Jahveh (Ex. iv. 22; cp. Deut. xiv. 1); as applied to the monarch (2 Sam. vii. 14) the moral significance of the phrase is still more evident. Cp. Pss. lxxxix. 26, 27, and ii. 7; see also Oehler, *O. T. Theology*, § 165, note 7.

[2] Cp. Mic. v. 4 foll.; Isai. ix. 6, xi. 1 foll.

and missionary character of his work, in the atoning virtue of his sufferings, in the fruitfulness of his self-sacrifice, 'the servant of Jahveh' embodies more completely than the royal figure of earlier prophecy the spiritual purpose and universal scope of the Divine kingdom. The idea implies some recognition of the truth that the true function of the Messiah was 'not to establish a visible Jewish kingdom, but to do in a supreme way the will of God, whether it led to happiness or to misery[1].' In the apocalyptic literature the figure of the king reappears, but the tendency of the writers is to emphasise not so much the Davidic descent of the Messiah as His relationship to humanity. Such seems to be the real import of the title 'Son of Man.' Apparently it was not at any time a common designation of the Messiah, and our Lord seems to have employed it to illustrate the *character* rather than the claims of the Messianic office. By Him the title 'Son of Man' is employed in contexts which suggest lowly and sober ideas of the Messianic dignity—ideas of brotherhood with toiling and suffering humanity, self-forgetful ministry to others, faithfulness even unto death[2]. The phrase seems in fact to be coloured by reminiscences of such passages as Isai. liii. and Ps. viii. It implies a consciousness that man's destiny is a lofty one, but that it can only be fulfilled through submission to the common lot and absolute devotion to the will of God[3].

iv. The prophetic conception of the kingdom of God was gradually spiritualised. Under the discipline of heathen domination, with its distressful accompaniments, Israel learned that the kingdom was essentially 'the realm in which God's will was done.' The original covenant of Jahveh with His people had indeed been irreparably broken[4], and Israel during and after the exile was weighed down by a consciousness of

[1] Gardner, *A Historic View of the N. T.* lect. iii.
[2] See *e.g.* St Mt. viii. 20, xvii. 22, xxvi. 24; St Mk. ix. 31; St Lk. ix. 22.
[3] See Hastings' *DB*, vol. II. pp. 622, 623; vol. IV. p. 587.
[4] Jer. xxxi. 32.

uncleansed guilt which legal ordinances were powerless to remove. The earnest longing for an effectual remission of sins and for grace to fulfil Jahveh's requirement led to profounder conceptions of the Messianic deliverance. Since the yoke which pressed upon Israel was not so much that of heathen conquerors as that of sin, a new covenant was necessary to meet its need—a covenant under which the heart of the nation should be purified and renewed unto holiness. Such a covenant would necessarily be an act of grace—a Divine ordinance or disposition (διαθήκη)—in which Jahveh would take upon Himself the fulfilment of Israel's obligation by writing the Law in their hearts. Henceforth, therefore, the kingdom for which faith looked was the rule of God Himself over a regenerate people, purged from guilt and sanctified by the power of the Divine Spirit. And although when Jesus Christ came, this expectation had practically faded from the mind of the Jewish people[1], there was a remnant of faithful souls ready to respond to the preaching of repentance, and to welcome with joy the advent of one who should *save His people from their sins*[2].

The transformation of ideals.

In the preaching of Jesus Christ and of His Apostles the Messianic hope underwent a transformation. Elements ignored in the purely nationalistic ideals of Rabbinism were brought into prominence. For national deliverance from heathen oppression was substituted the salvation of the individual soul from sin[3]; the belief in the exaltation of Zion was merged in the conception of a catholic Church embracing both Gentile and Jew; the Messiah Himself combined with the majesty of a king and the

[1] Dr Edersheim, *op. cit.* vol. I. p. 165, remarks on 'the absence of felt need of deliverance from sin.' On the other hand the *Psalms of Solomon* reflect in a measure the penitential temper which prepared devout Israelites for the Gospel, *e.g. Pss. Sol.* ii. 16 foll., viii. 27—41.

[2] St Mt. i. 21. Cp. Acts iii. 26.

[3] See Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, pp. 149 foll.

authority of a prophet the traits of the ideal *servant of the* LORD,—entire devotion to God, meekness, willingness to suffer, submission to persecution and death. The Messianic unction was henceforth understood to signify the endowment of the Spirit wherewith Christ was 'anointed' at His baptism. His resurrection and ascension drew men's thoughts to heaven as the sphere from which He had once descended and should hereafter come again; they recognised that His was not merely an earthly kingship, and that the Messianic blessings foretold by prophecy and bestowed by Jesus Christ were not material but spiritual—the forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Spirit, the writing of the Law in men's hearts, *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*[1]. Finally, a new and awful light was thrown upon the relationship in which the Messiah stood to the God whose servant and vicegerent He claimed to be. 'The title *Son of God* lost, or almost so, the associations with specifically Messianic ideas which it might have had[2].'

Thus what meets us in the New Testament dispensation is a development of general *principles* rather than a precise fulfilment of details. The historic or pictorial details of the prophetic imagery for the most part disappear, and only the great general conceptions of prophecy remain, transfigured and illuminated by the light of the Gospel[3]. The first preachers of Christianity claim for our Lord, not that He was precisely such a Messiah as the Jews expected, but that He was such as their spiritual needs demanded. In His Person and office many divergent lines of prophecy found a meeting-point. The elements of 'a relatively complete ideal' were in Him combined and harmonised[4].

[1] Rom. xiv. 17.

[2] Dr Stanton in Hastings' *DB*, vol. III. p. 356. See also Dr Sanday's article 'Son of God' in vol. IV., esp. pp. 374 foll.

[3] Cp. Dr Davidson's *O. T. Prophecy*, ch. xi., esp. pp. 169 foll.

[4] See Stanton, *ubi sup.*

II We have noticed that in its later stages prophecy connected with the manifestation of the Messianic kingdom the forgiveness and removal of sin. There intervened, between the epoch of the prophets and the advent of the Redeemer, some four or five centuries during which Israel was subjected to the discipline of the Levitical Law. In its developed system, the Law virtually embodied the Messianic ideal of the priesthood, namely, the presence of Jahveh dwelling in the midst of a regenerate Israel. Its dominant keynote was the holiness of Israel regarded as the chosen people of the Most Holy. Consequently, the Law gave extraordinary prominence to the idea of sin. The practical effect of the legal ordinances was to deepen Israel's sense of the gulf which separated man from God, and to guard by severe restrictions the right of access to Him. Thus it may be fairly said that the Law took up Israel's spiritual education at the point where Prophecy had left it. The Law was in fact, as St Paul expresses it, *added because of transgressions*, *i.e.* in order that it might reveal and multiply offences, and so develope the consciousness of guilt and the longing for a dispensation of grace[1]. Accordingly, by a vast and complex system of sacrifices and ceremonies the Law impressed upon the conscience of Israel the all-pervading presence of sin, and it indicated in outline the conditions under which fellowship with God might be attained. Just as the shortcomings of the monarchy at one time gave an impulse to the expectation of an ideal king, so the manifest incapacity of the Levitical ordinances *to take away sin* quickened the desire for the advent of a true Priest who should *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*[2]. The Law was an object-lesson which tended to impress upon the Jews the real nature of that Messianic deliverance for which they looked. The

Christ and the Law.

[1] Gal. iii. 19; cp. Rom. iii. 20, v. 20.
[2] Heb. ix. 26.

hostile power which hindered Israel from the fulfilment of its destiny was sin[1].

The continuity of the Christian Church with Israel is everywhere taken for granted in the New Testament[2]; and it is the undeniable fact of this continuity that justifies the reflection of Ambrose (based on Heb. x. 1), *Umbra in lege, imago vero in evangelio, veritas in caelestibus*[3]. The details of the Levitical *cultus* need not detain us. It is enough to note that the legal system, regarded as a whole, served a providential purpose of Divine grace, that it foreshadowed the means by which the true end of religion—union with God—was ultimately to be obtained, and that as a matter of fact it developed a rare and noble type of spiritual religion (the Psalter). Speaking broadly, indeed, the Law may be regarded in either of two aspects, (i) as a ceremonial system designed to meet, and in part to educate, man's sense of sin and spiritual need; (ii) as a law of righteousness which man found himself powerless to fulfil.

The ceremonial law.

In its former aspect the legal system is dealt with in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Christ is here set forth as the High Priest of humanity. He removes by the sacrifice of Himself the sin which hindered man from perfect union with God, and He provides a spiritual, and therefore effectual, means of cleansing the conscience and renewing the will. Other passages of the New Testament encourage us to pursue this line of thought: for instance such as apply to the Christian society titles properly belonging to God's ancient people[4]: such as dwell upon the spiritual significance of circumcision, or describe Jesus Christ as the Paschal victim, *the Lamb of God, a propitiation for our sins,*

[1] E. de Pressensé, *Jésus-Christ, son temps*, etc., p. 294. 'Le joug qui l'accablait n'était pas celui de Rome, c'était le péché.'

[2] See *e.g.* St Mt. xix. 28; Rom. xi. 18; Eph. ii. 12, 19.

[3] *in Ps.* xxxviii. 25 (ap. Willis, *Worship of the Old Covenant*, p. 14).

[4] 1 St Pet. ii. 9.

a ransom for many[1]. It must suffice barely to indicate the way in which the Law foreshadows the mysteries of the Gospel and the ordinances of the Church[2]—a subject which would require a separate treatise.

The moral law.

On the other hand, the Old Covenant imposed upon man's will a law of moral obedience. Its discipline was intended to develope a certain type of character—the character which we see exhibited in the devotional language of the Psalms and in the fervent loyalty of the prophets—the character of the faithful and devoted 'servant of Jahveh.' The Law failed, as St Paul says, *in that it was weak through the flesh*[3]; and in fact even the highest type of character moulded by the legal dispensation had its limitations and defects. It was not altogether free from impatience, querulousness, vindictiveness, and even self-righteousness. It was destined to give place to something higher, 'as the flower to the fruit, as childhood to manhood[4].' In Jesus Christ was manifested the righteousness towards which the discipline of the Old Testament was constantly tending: the spirit or temper which the prophets had partially exhibited and which the Law itself had enjoined: the spirit of entire self-consecration to the will of God,—whole-hearted love of God and love of man for His sake. Christ came *not to destroy but to fulfil* the Law, and it was in two sentences taken from its pages that He summed up the *whole duty of man*[5]. But the complete commentary on His words is to be found in His life: in His filial devotion to God, in His attitude towards sin, in His dealings with the outcast and

[1] Rom. ii. 29; Col. ii. 11; 1 Cor. v. 7; St John i. 29; 1 St John ii. 2; St Mt. xx. 28.

[2] Cp. the passage in which Augustine shows summarily how Christ 'fulfilled' the ceremonial law, *c. Faust. Manich.* xix. 9—11.

[3] Rom. viii. 3.

[4] See R. W. Church, *The Discipline of the Christian Character*, Serm. III.; on the defects of O. T. religion see Bruce, *Apologetics*, bk. ii. ch. 10.

[5] St Mk. xii. 29—31. Cp. Church, *op. cit.* Serm. IV.

despised, in the completeness of His self-sacrifice. In His teaching and in His actions He unfolded the true content of the Law; He illustrated the essential meaning of the statement that the *law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good*[1]; by His own mediatorial work and by the free gift of His grace He brought the fulfilment of the Law within the reach of men, *ut jam* (as Augustine writes) *non essent legi subditi per reatum, sed legi sociati per iustitiam*[2]. Thus in its fullest significance and in all its aspects the Law was fulfilled in Christ. It taught men their own spiritual needs, and the comprehensiveness of the Divine requirement; it aimed at the consecration of all life, physical and moral; it set forth union with God as the true end of human nature. It is reasonable to believe that it also foreshadowed the mysteries by which the yearnings and aspirations of those who lived under the yoke of its discipline should be finally satisfied.

The Hagiographa.

III. The discipline of the Law was supplemented by the teachings of life itself. What we may call the moral and spiritual experience of Israel is enshrined in the latest portion of the Hebrew canon. The 'Writings' (*Hagiographa*) in fact embody the religious ideas of a people which has passed through many vicissitudes of fortune. They are for the most part the products either of reflection exercising itself on Israel's past history and on the problems of human life, or of religious emotion striving to find appropriate expression. They contribute an element of universality to Israel's religion in so far as they reflect the aspirations and perplexities, not of a particular race, but of humanity.

There were indeed problems which pressed heavily upon the Jewish mind in that dreary waste of years which followed the extinction of Israel's national hopes, when religion had become to a certain extent individualistic, and when contact with heathenism had fostered the temper of religious specu-

[1] Rom. vii. 14. [2] *c. Faust. Manich.* xix. 7.

lation. Inevitable questions arose touching immortality and the future life, a particular providence, the law of Divine retribution, the meaning and purpose of the sufferings of innocence. Scope was thus found within the limits of Jewish faith for a philosophy of life, a 'Wisdom' which in one aspect indeed has points of contact with Christian thought, but which for the most part stated difficulties which only the Incarnation could solve. The Old Testament, besides being the record of Divine revelation, is also in great measure the self-disclosure of the human heart. It finds a place in its pages for the appeal and complaint of man to God; it gives utterance to the sorrowful protests of persecuted saints; it describes their perplexities; it records their songs of deliverance or their patient acquiescence in God's dealings with them. The book of Job may be particularly mentioned as one which exposed the deficiencies of the current doctrine of retribution. It prepared the Jew for a suffering Messiah by reminding him that 'virtue was not always rewarded here, and that therefore no argument could be drawn from affliction and ignominy against the person who suffered it[1].'

The teaching of Christ.

Now in the teaching of Jesus Christ two features are equally prominent: its *reserve* and its *positiveness*. There are questions, prompted by curiosity or intellectual restlessness, to which He vouchsafes no answer; there are also matters on which He speaks with perfect clearness and with unique authority. He enunciates great principles; He leaves points of detail in obscurity. Thus He brings *life and immortality to light through the Gospel*[2]. He expressly confirms those presages of a final judgment and a severance of good from bad which had sustained the faith of sages and prophets. He encourages men to believe that the true solution of their perplexities is to be found beyond the limits of this life. He teaches explicitly the all-controlling providence of Almighty God, the care and

[1] J. B. Mozley, *Essays*, vol. II. pp. 227 foll. [2] 2 Tim. i. 10.

mercy which He extends *over all His works*. But the sufferings of innocence find no explanation elsewhere than in His own Passion and Resurrection. Identifying Himself to the uttermost with the pangs and sorrows of all the ancient martyrs and saints, He set forth in His own Person the meaning and the issue of pain. He appropriated and made His own all that is hardest to bear in the lot of man: temptation, poverty, homelessness, exacting toil, weariness, persecution, failure and disappointment, scorn and ingratitude, the contradiction of sinners, agony of body and mind, a death of shame. He showed how all these things might minister to man's spiritual perfection and might prepare him for the state of glory and blessedness. He showed that while suffering is the necessary mark of God's judgment upon sin, it is not incompatible with personal sinlessness. Thus as His disciples came to understand more deeply Who and What Jesus Christ was, they recognised in His Passion and Resurrection the sufficient answer to their cry for a fresh manifestation of God; they learned what nothing less or lower could have adequately taught them, that *God is light*, *God is love*[1].

The Wisdom-literature.

The sapiential literature of the Hebrews prepared the way for the Gospel, partly as we have seen by stating problems which the revelation of God in Christ was destined to solve, partly by lifting into prominence the universalistic element in Israel's faith. The 'Wisdom' formed a link between Judaism and Hellenism, by suggesting the possibility that *in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness* might be *acceptable to Him*[2]. It contemplated the universe as the sphere of God's moral governance and of His manifested Reason or Word. It pointed forward to Christ as the true reconciler of humanity, in whom all things are summed up, Gentile and Jew are made one, all *the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* are concealed[3]. Finally, the Wisdom-literature by its silence no less than by its

[1] 1 St John i. 5, iv. 8. [2] Acts x. 35. [3] Eph. i. 10, ii. 14; Col. ii. 3.

explicit statements re-enforced the teachings of prophecy in regard to the kind of religion which God could accept and bless,—a doctrine which was crowned by the saying of Christ Himself: *they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth*[1].

Summary.

Thus throughout the history of Israel, the Spirit of Him to whom are *known all His works from the beginning of the world*[2], was ever manifestly at work 'enabling those whom He inspired to anticipate His purposes and to read, each in his measure, the Divine thoughts for mankind[3].' Only when we grasp the significance of St Paul's phrase *the fulness of Christ*[4], can we do justice to the many-sided witness borne to Him by the ancient Scriptures.

In narrative and parable, in song and prophecy, different aspects of Christ's kingdom are foreshadowed; in the ministries of the ancient priesthood His mediatorial work is prefigured; in the prayers of saints and the cry of martyrs, His voice is heard or His coming anticipated. As we study the Old Testament in the light of modern knowledge we become not less but more convinced that the history of Hebrew religion is an organic whole to which the Messiah and His kingdom are the key; we become not less but more certain that it was for Christ that Israel and the world waited—*quem regem ad regendos, et sacerdotem ad sanctificandos fideles suos, universus ille apparatus veteris Instrumenti in generationibus, factis, dictis, sacrificiis, observationibus, festivitatibus, omnibusque eloquiorum praeconiis, et rebus gestis et rerum figuris parturiebat esse venturum*[5].

[1] St John iv. 24. [2] Acts xv. 18. [3] Schultz, *O. T. Theology*, I. 54.
[4] Eph. i. 23. [5] Aug. *c. Faust. Manich.* xix. 31 *s. fin.*

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